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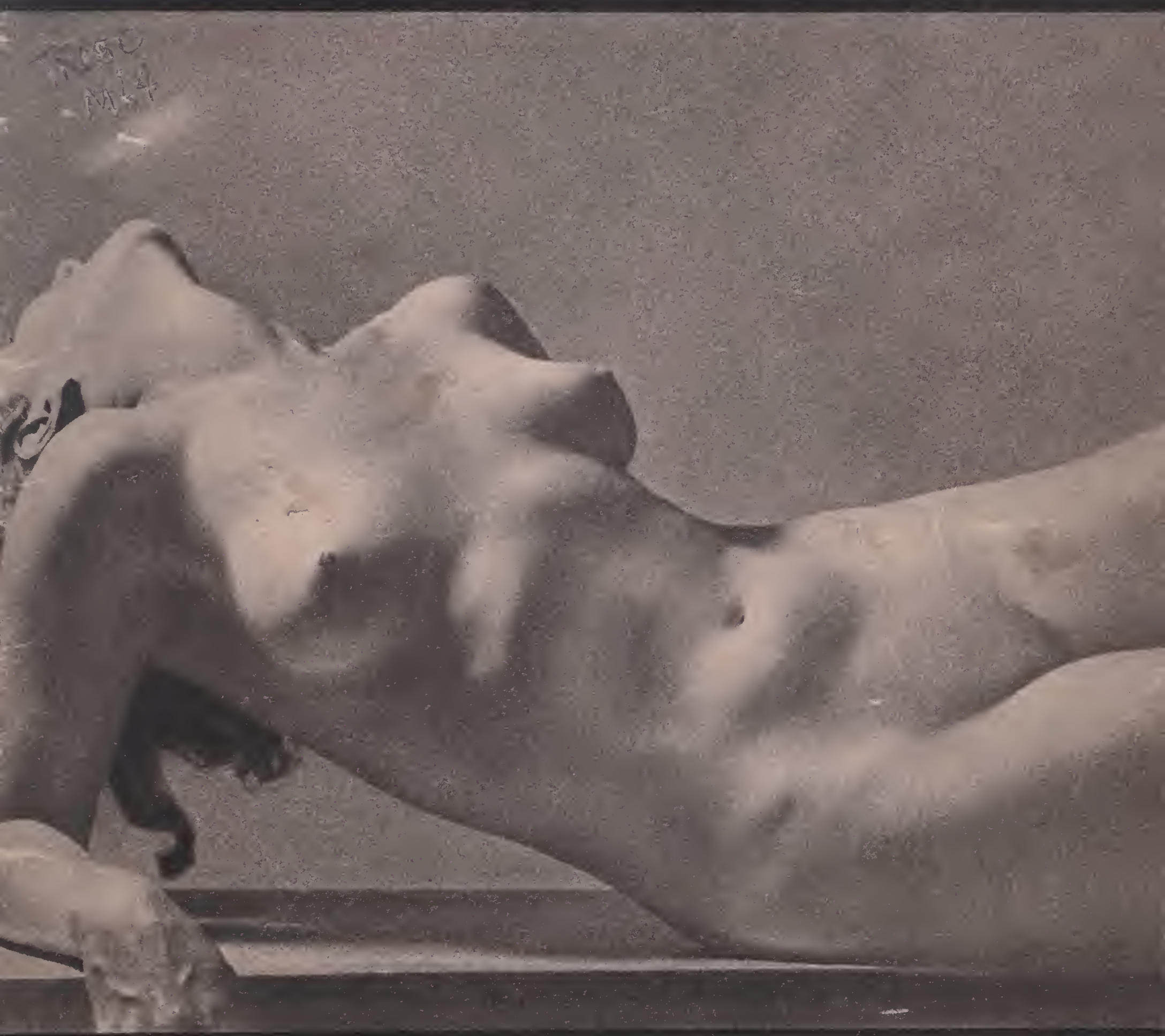
MONSTERS & MADONNAS



A BOOK OF METHODS

WILLIAM MORTENSEN

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Camera Craft Publishing Company
San Francisco

Other Books By

WILLIAM MORTENSEN

Projection Control

Pictorial Lighting

MONSTERS & MADONNAS

by

WILLIAM MORTENSEN

CAMERA CRAFT PUBLISHING COMPANY
San Francisco, California

MONSTERS AND MADONNAS

"It is working within limits that the artist reveals himself."

—Goethe.

"You can't fool me. I'm too ignorant."

—Joe Penner.

The Dual Substance of Art

In every art practiced by man it is noticeable that there are two contributing elements, the harmonious relationship of which makes the complete art. Every art has a mechanical and scientific basis and an expressive and creative superstructure. Most of the arts realize themselves so readily into expression and creation that the layman is scarcely conscious of the mechanical and scientific basis. Thus the art of painting depends upon the delicate chemistry of pigments, the oxidation of such mediums as linseed oil, and upon the use of a few simple mechanical aids. Music depends upon the difficult science of acoustics, and upon the mechanical design of a large variety of complicated instruments; and as it is commonly experienced today it is further conditioned by the intricate technical problems of electrical transcription or radio broadcasting. And behind the art of architecture there lies a large amount of specialized engineering knowledge of stresses, strains, and strengths of materials.

In these arts the layman is not commonly aware of this scientific and mechanical background. The mechanical and scientific facts and factors serve their end unostentatiously. The chemist does not dictate the color of the Virgin's mantle, nor the radio technician stipulate the tempo of a Beethoven symphony. There is no obvious mass of somewhat related, but completely unassimilated, knowledge.

How different is the situation that we find when we come to consider photography. In this field there is an over-whelming and almost exclusive devotion to the mechanical and physical aspects of the art. Even the layman is aware of this. Put two photographers together, and what do they talk about? *Cameras. A new kind of film. Grain. Filter factors. Physical development. Grain. Paraphenyline-diamine. Printing papers. Grain. Panchromatization. Gamma. Grain. What kind of a lens does Misonne use? Formulas. Focal lengths. Grain. Eastman. Agfa. Du Pont. Gaevert. Perutz. Grain.* . . . And is there ever any suggestion, any vague hint, that these things have any use, any purpose, beyond that of amusing and providing conversation for amateurs? There is not.

This peculiar anomaly of a mechanically dominated art is due to two causes. In the first place, in photography (and in no other art) the instrument and the method preceded the art. In the other arts the scientific element and the expressive element have largely grown up together, keeping pace with each other, and each contributing to the other's development. But photography arrived on the scene already weighted down with much irelevant knowledge. This body of useless erudition has been much expanded by technicians unwilling to relinquish what they consider their prior rights.

The second cause of photography's predicament is the unhappy facility with which superficial photographic facts and procedures may be learned. When a man buys a camera, he considers himself *ipso facto* half a photographer. When he has owned it a week, he considers himself an advanced amateur. When he has owned it a month, he considers himself a photographic authority. In no other art does such a preposterous condition exist. The purchase of a piano (even if it is a Steinway) does not make one a Rachmaninoff—or even an Eddie Duchin. But the damnable mechanical ingenuity of the camera attracts to the field of photography thousands of bright young men whose sole qualification is the fact that they are mechanically ingenious. Many talents are now devoted to photography that could turn out a mousetrap that would set the world on fire.

Of course every art has its mechanical dabblers and its scientific dilletantes. But nowhere else do they so presume to run the show—and to get away with it—as in photography.

In the approach to any other art there is a clear distinction made between the technical fact which is immediately *applicable*, and the scientifically related fact which is technically irrelevant. No one would

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presume to seriously practice any other art without extended instruction from a master. This instruction would give him manual dexterity through arduous finger exercises; it would clarify his sense perceptions and his means of expression; it would give him an appreciation of the tradition of his art; and it would clarify his vision of what he wanted to do with his skill.

But in photography there is little attention given to the acquisition of skill, and such skill as exists is largely sterile. The picture—the presumable reason for the existence of photography—becomes a side issue—a mere accidental or incidental by-product of the grinding of the gammas and factors. All too often the hopeful amateur is corrupted by these mechanical influences. The technical-minded interlopers in the photographic field, of course, enjoy impressing the wide-eyed amateur with their importance and the prodigious extent of their knowledge. So the amateur learns to prattle eruditely of gammas, and before long forgets all about the matter of making pictures, which was his original reason for going into photography. When he does have to cope with pictures, he makes very clear his conviction that an extra-fine picture must have been produced by a shot of something extra-special in the developer.

The Threat of the Machine

It was a frequent thought of writers of the nineteenth century, when science was growing apace and the whole world was being mechanized, that the Machine might eventually become so powerful that it would rebel against and enslave Man, its maker. Man, they saw, was contributing every day to the further domination of the Machine by permitting it to take over and control fresh phases of his life. Samuel Butler, in his story *Erewhon*, tells of a people that, becoming aware of the rising tyranny of the Machine, banished it from their land, and made the possession of any manifestation of it, whether watch or locomotive, a capital crime. And Mrs. Shelley in *Frankenstein* created the archtype of the inventor who is overwhelmed by his mechanically created monster.

In photography we see the threat of the Machine come to pass. The Monster is in control. Thousands of potential artists are ruled brain and hand by the dictates of the Machine.

The Machine manifests itself in many ways.

It appears in the form of a multiplicity of cameras.

Now, all cameras are essentially alike; a light-tight box with a lens in front of it. From the cheapest to the most expensive, all modifications and attachments are purely incidental. Yet these trifling variations from the basic design are regarded by the victims of the Machine as though they were matters of real importance. These victims usually end up by acquiring a large number of cameras, none of which they ever learn to use.

The machine shows itself in the exaggerated importance attached to films. All the characteristics of all the different makes of films are subjected to comparison and cross-reference. Factors of speed, colour correction, and contrast are worked out to several decimal points. But very seldom does anyone think of using the films to take pictures.

With printing paper there is a similar wanton multiplication of difficulties. This basic commodity is provided in a huge variety of textures, weights and contrasts and in all possible permutations of these variants. There are also very extensive documentary manifestations of the machine, bulky volumes of exposure tables and equations, lists of formulas and factors, graphs and gammas. These things, while not outwardly alluring, exert a terrific fascination on those amateurs who have incautiously partaken of them.

As a final manifestation of the Machine, may we cite the demoralizing influence of those tiny, pestiferous, gnat-like, swarming Monsters—gadgets. Some of these excrescences are infernally clever, and some are witlessly inane; but clever or witless they are unequalled as a means whereby photographers may waste time, money and energy. Those afflicted with gadgets lose all sense of proportion, and like the White Knight who equipped his horse with a mouse trap, a bee hive, and protection against the bites of sharks, they carry on in their conviction that "it's well to be provided for *everything*." So they lay in large stocks of supernumerary lenses and filters; they acquire lights by the dozens and light meters to measure them with; they fill up their darkrooms with mysterious apparatus, concerning the use of which the very inventors are a little vague. The real need for such an article seems not to affect in the slightest either the maker or the purchaser of a gadget. It simply satisfies the eternal juvenile craving for something new and nickle-plated.

By a natural association of ideas, the mention of gadgets brings us to the consideration of the miniature camera.

The miniature camera has become the particular stamping ground of the Popular Mechanics graduates and the Boy Blacksmiths. Thanks to the engineering genius of its designers and the precision processes of its makers, the miniature instrument is fundamentally a magnificent Camera; but it has been transformed by these lads into a super-Gadget, which is constantly giving birth to little gadgets. The fairly simple procedure of taking a picture has been converted into a terrific equation, including factors, Scheiners, gammas and other items from the Greek alphabet. Even if one were enough of an Einstein to solve the equation, the answer would have little significance, for they have neglected to include any intimation of what they wanted to *say* with the picture (which is a factor incapable of being reduced to mathematical terms).

Beeause these owners of miniature eameras must oecasionally take pictures, there has grown up a group of so-ealled "candid camera" enthusiasts. The "eandid eamera" should not really be regarded as photography at all, but as a sort of indoor game eomparable to "Adverbs" or "Sardine." The prineipal point of the game eonsists in taking pictures where pictures should not be taken. Of all unhappy ways of spending an evening in the theater, from the viewpoint of either a photographer or a theater-goer, the worst would seem to be that of furtively snapping the aetion of the play from a front row seat. Other eandid eamera addiets stalk their prey in restaurants, night-elubs or eourtrooms. One and all, their results are very similar; "See that blur in the right-hand eorner? . . . That's Joan Crawford."

Even the layman realizes the slightness and futility of these reeord pietures. When the eandid layman meets the eandid eamera his eomment is apt to be: "But why spend two hundred dollars on a camera if this is all that you are going to do with it? My ten-year-old son, Johnnie, has taken mueh better pieturcs with his two dollar Brownie." And the layman is perfeetly right. The candid eamera enthusiast is under the domination of the Monster, the Maehine. He is involved in equations, baffled by gadgets, and eonfused by the multitudinous adjustments on his camera. Johnnie, on the other hand, simply sees an image that he likes, points his eamera at it, and punches the button. Johnnie, beeause he is not old enough, is not alarmed, impressed, or eonfused by the Machine.

At one hundredth the eost, anyone with a little pietorial sense ean readily surpass the results of the average minieam equipment in the hands of the average minieam owner. The pieture on this page was made with a Hawkeye eamera, eosting $1.39. The Maehine was not permitted to intrude. The only issues were the Image and its effeetive presentation.

These remarks are not to be eonstrued as unfavorable comment on the miniature eamera itself, but simply on the prevalent abuse of it. To a large proportion of its users, the minieam has been converted into a Monster—a compaet but very terrible little Monster.

Monsters and Madonnas

Against this symbol of the Monster—representing all the meehanically hampering, all the teehnieally frightening, all the mathematically imposing, influenees in photography, we may set another symbol, one of even greater antiquity. This is the symbol of the Madonna. This is possibly most frequently assoeiated with Christian legend and art, but it is far older than these. Even to the devout primitive Christian artists, the Madonna was mueh more than a representation of a person in a religious drama. She was a symbol of fruitfulness and growth, of life and ereative energy. Hers was wisdom past mere knowing of facts. She was the power that built empires and reared eathedrals, that led men to labor with their hands to express the truth they had seen in their hearts.

A favorite medieval legend utilizes the Monster and Madonna theme in signifieant fashion. A story often repeated is that of a beautiful Lady walled up in a dark tower whereof the jealous guardian is a terrible Dragon. Here we have a pieture of the present predieament of

"Portrait" — *William Mortensen*

DATA. Camera. Eastman Hawkeye box eamera, 2¼ x 4¼ (priee $1.39).
Lens. Meniseus plus Kodak No. 3 portrait attaehment (75 eents).
Aperture. Undetermined.
Exposure. About one half second.
Film. Eastman Panehromatie roll film, 1936.
Camera distanee. Three feet, eight ineches.
Lighting. Contour.
Developer. Glyein-Borax.
Time of development. One hour and a half.*
Projeetion control. Dodging in.
Printing paper. Defender Velour Black I.
Print developer. Eastman D-64, B. solution.
Treatment of print. Abrasion-Tone.

*Owing to my lack of facilities for handling roll film of this size, the negative was given to a camera shop for development. Under violent protest from the laboratory man, who considered the whole proceeding as fantastic and subversive, it was developed for one hour and a half.

the photographic art—creative power held captive by the Machine. This is the urgent need of photography: a Saint George—or, rather, a regiment of Saint Georges—who shall slay the Dragon and rescue the distressed Lady.

The Conquest of the Machine

In the absence of such a rescuer it becomes the task of every amateur whose interest in photography transcends that of a plumber installing a bathtub to wage his own campaign against the Monster.

The first step in the conquest of the Machine is the mental task of persuading oneself, definitely and completely, of the inadequacy and ultimate futility of the Machine. One very potent means of persuasion, for those who still cherish doubts, is to ask the eloquent technician in the midst of his discourse: "By the way, what pictures have you made lately? What, in short, have you accomplished with your knowledge?" The questioner may with perfect safety to himself guarantee to eat all the pictures worthy of the name that the gamma-wise technician has produced. It is not a cynicism but a simple fact that too much scientific knowledge is a handicap in creative photography. Many trails lead to the Monster's den, but very few lead away from it.

Having accomplished the mental conquest of the Machine, one may turn to the practical aspects of the problem. The first practical step consists of drastic *simplification of equipment*. For every photographer nowadays that is hampered by insufficient equipment, there are probably a thousand that are hampered by insufficient limitation of equipment. In all other arts this limitation goes without saying. The violinist does not seek to increase the expressiveness of his instrument by putting on ten more strings, but by increasing his command over the four that it has. Nearly every great painter is noted for the characteristically limited range of his palette: he doesn't mess around with all the colours he can lay his hands on; instead, for the sake of greater command and expressiveness in his medium, he works within narrow, self-imposed limits.

To most photographers any significant simplification will entail abandoning, giving away, or selling a considerable part of their equipment and materials. Anything that does not have immediate functional significance, that does not contribute directly to the making of the picture, is superfluous and should be gotten rid of. Learn to regard equipment merely in its functional aspects. Thus a camera—no matter what it cost—is ultimately nothing but a light-tight box with a lens, with a few facilities for adjustment. Film—whether Orthochromatic or Panchromatic—whether fast or slow—is merely the means of recording the image. The developer—whether made with paraphenylinediamine or tomato ketchup—is only the humble means whereby the latent image is made visible.

So the photographer at the outset would strictly limit himself to one camera with one (short focal length) lens, with a single kind of film, a single developer, and a single kind of printing paper. And in using these he would employ a single, unified system of procedure. This limitation of equipment is the first step in acquiring *technique*. Technique conquers the machine by putting it to work.

At the beginning of the Introduction I mentioned the two distinct elements of art, the mechanical and the creative. Technique in any art is the act by which these two elements are brought together and harmonized. Through technique the mechanical is bent to the needs of the creative. In this sense of the word, most photographers completely lack technique. Many have acquired mechanical skill, some have creative ability; but few have managed to *bridge the gap* between the two.

In any other art the student gains technical mastery by means of arduous practice and finger exercises. In order to secure dominance over the mechanical aspects of his art, the photographic amateur needs to cultivate the same approach. All methods and procedures should be reduced to a swift and facile ritual. A photographer should be able to toss his camera ten feet in the air, catch it, and swing instantly into the business of taking a picture, with the correct fingers on the correct buttons. He should be able to load his film magazines in the dark, easily and without fumbling, three feet to a magazine, three magazines in five minutes. All the operations in development should be instinctive and invariable. Without experiment, he should know instantly how far to pull out his enlarger to get the degree of enlargement he wishes. Sheer mechanical competence is very valuable—and very rare. One gains it much more readily if the condition of a minimum of equipment has been met.

Releasing the Imagination

With the Monster brought to heel, there remains the problem of releasing and putting to work that creative urge, that emotional drive, that energy that we have symbolized as the Madonna. For sake of convenience I shall hereafter refer to this force as "imagination"; but let it be clearly understood that as herein used it does not have to do so much with the passive day-dreaming that the word sometimes connotes as it does with the *active* power that demands creative outlet.

Both in its active and passive phases, the imagination has in many photographers been beaten down and suppressed by the domination of the Machine. How may this long-comatose force be revived and restored to effectiveness?

Happily, it seems that although the imagination may be crushed and starved, it can never be destroyed utterly. Like the germ in the wheat that survived a drought of two thousand years, it springs to life again under the right conditions. Even the death of the individual cannot destroy the imagination, for that which is clearly and strongly imagined partakes of eternity.

Through the imagination works that ever-diligent universal force that Alois Riegl has designated as the "Will-to-Form." All nature shows the striving of this Will to find fruition in concrete, tangible form. It represents the universal revolt against chaos. Inanimate nature equally with animate nature is driven by the Will to express itself in form.

Among inanimate things the Will-to-Form expresses itself beautifully and concisely in the mysterious phenomena of crystallization. Rock-salt appears in compact cubes, and quartz in hexagonal prisms. A serics of lovely and never-ending improvisations on the hexagonal form is seen in snow crystals—no two the same and yet all alike. Closely related to crystallization, according to Riegl, is the instinctive geometric ornament of many primitive peoples.

In phyllotaxis, the arrangement and spacing of leaves on the stem, in the geometry of flowers, in the subtly turned spiral of the sea-shell, are seen more projects in design brought about by the Will-to-Form. In a volume called *Art Forms in Nature* are collected many illustrated instances.

Claude Bragdon in *Projective Ornament* and Jay Hambidge in *Dynamic Symmetry* have shown that geometry itself speaks in terms of beautiful forms.

A familiar instance of the irresistible working of this Will-to-Form is seen in the business man who, while intent on a telephone conversation, assiduously sketches decorative scrawls on his blotting pad. And we all know the annoyance we feel when we are faced by a meaningless blot on the wall or smear of cloud in the sky. The Will-to-Form will not let us rest until we have persuaded ourselves that the blot or cloud looks like an elephant or the profile of an Indian.

All but the most gross are potentially channels of the Will-to-Form. Herein lies the salvation of the machine-ridden imagination. If we work in the right manner, if we make ourselves receptive to it, the Will-to-Form will realize itself through us. The Will is *there*, ready and waiting; we must make ourselves ready for it. There is a certain element of courtship in the creation of a picture—courtship without cave-man tactics. Aggressive egotism will fail; mere dogged stubbornness, mere bludgeon strategy, will not suffice. Before the Will works, conditions must be prepared, hindrances must be removed.

The artist seeking releasc for his imagination is apt to find that there is *within himself* a hindrance to its working which may prove nearly as hampering as the Machine. It is a hindrance more subtle in its influence than the latter, and hence more difficult to cope with. The Machine is a concrete entity and one may take concrete measures with it, such as throwing excess equipment out the window and dumping excess chemicals down the drain. But here we have to do with an enemy within the gates, a Monster within the confines of our own skulls.

This Monster is the *conscious mind*—the logical and worldly-wise conscious mind that suggests that we put on our rubbers when we go out in the wet, that reminds us to bring home a loaf of bread and half-a-dozen eggs, that firmly says "No" when we entertain foolish ideas. The conscious mind is a Babbitt. It is concerned horribly with what other people think; it has a sense of guilt in departing from the conventional; and it is prone to judge what can be done in the light of what has been done. So it is bound to disapprove of that lewd and adventurous fellow, the imagination. To the promptings of the imagination, the conscious mind says, "Absurd! Preposterous! Ridiculous! Impractical! The very idea!" To which the imagination replies apologetically, "Excuse me. Sorry I mentioned it."

Therefore, in pictorial procedure it is necessary always to seek ways to strengthen and give confidence to the imagination, and to free it from the officious interference of the conscious mind. Only so can it provide an open channel to the Will-to-Form. The method in which one works during the taking of the picture is very important in this regard. Let me depict one method that is all-too-frequent among amateurs. It is representative of a type of worker who has not freed himself from the dead hand of the Machine, and who bends a heedful ear to the comments of that good old Rotarian, the conscious mind. He prepares his subject matter with great deliberation, and chooses his camera angle with the most meticulous care. He makes countless adjustments and readjustments of his camera. He takes repeated readings with his exposure meter, and checks Scheiners and filter factors in the handbook which he carries. After two hours of such preparation he approaches the camera and reverently takes *one exposure!* Technically, the result may be excellent; but pictorially it can only be a tight, hard, smug expression of the conscious mind.

Another and far better method of working is one of free improvisation on a well-established basis. A photographer using this method makes his original set-up with a certain amount of care, but without undue loss of time. He takes at least five or six exposures of it, varying the time widely but maintaining a single moderate diaphragm setting (about f.9) throughout. Then he begins introducing slight variations in his original set-up, or in his camera angle. Each variation is recorded in several exposures. It may be necessary for him to make these variations arbitrarily at first, but he gets them. Presently variants begin to suggest themselves *spontaneously*. Then he is really under way. He has begun to get beyond thc banal promptings of the workaday mind, beyond the deadening influcnce of the Machine. He begins to function as a channcl of the Will-to-Form. Thc photographer (and often the modcl also) will bc borne along on a freely flowing stream of associations. He will dcpart widely, wicrdly, and outragcously from his first smug concception. And all along thc linc he will take plcnty of exposures. To the carcful conscrva-

tive worker he will appear to have taken complete leave of sanity. And so, in a sense, he has; for excessive sanity is a mental manifestation of the Machine. But when the sitting is ended, with the photographer utterly dishevelled and the model in a state of collapse, there will be *results*. He will have shot at least six dozen exposures, if he uses film packs; or at least six magazines, if he uses a miniature camera. Some of the negatives will be under-exposed, some will be over-exposed; some will be double exposed, and some will be sans exposure; but somewhere among the lot there will be a *picture*.

It not infrequently happens that the would-be pictorialist, surveying the world about him, can discover no pictures. He is tormented by the certainty that pictures are there, but he simply can't find them. This picture blindness is not caused by a lack of material, but by an excess of it. The imagination is thwarted by the want of a point to focus itself upon. Such a person needs to orient himself and to simplify his approach to pictorial material. A little self-analysis will undoubtedly reveal to him that there is a certain similarity in those cases in which he *has* seen—or at least suspected—pictorial possibilities: In other words, that which most appeals to him is a fairly restricted type of pictorial material. In discovering the trend of his preference, he will greatly facilitate his growth in pictorial expression. The imagination works most readily with the material that one enjoys. When it is evident that one has a predilection for a certain type of material, one should definitely specialize in it. In seeking out and exploiting the possibilities of a restricted field one gains increasing mastery over his medium.*

Having chosen his field of specialization, he must stand by his choice, even at the cost of some personal unpleasantness. The would-be landscape photographer must firmly resist suggestions that he take pictures of his friend's wife and baby, and the budding portraitist must be adamant in his refusal to take action shots of the football game. Having once clarified his pictorial problem, it is sheer stupidity for him to complicate it again. As he works steadily with a certain limited type of material, he will find his picture blindness gradually disappearing, and he will more and more often know that happy experience of having a picture reveal itself, like a gem in the matrix, clear-cut and serene among the encompassing confusion.

This important moment at which the picture is discovered, at which it detaches itself from its surrounding irrelevancies, may occur at various points in the photographic procedure. Sometimes the picture is clearly limned in advance by the imagination, and the desired result is secured by deliberate arrangement of pictorial materials. Sometimes the picture reveals itself in a casual movement of the model, a "happy moment" which is seized by the alert photographer. And sometimes the picture does not appear until it unexpectedly looks out at you from the proof. In a case such as the last, the picture usually departs widely from the conscious intent of the photographer, who suddenly becomes aware that by entirely different framing, by emphasizing this line and by subordinating this mass, there will be created a picture vastly better than the one he originally conceived. The photographer must keep himself constantly alert to take advantage of these hints.

Control is particularly essential in these pictures which we have originally overlooked, and which the beneficent Will-to-Form brings to our attention. In such cases the picture proper is apt to be cluttered with a lot of non-essentials, and considerable control is needed to extricate it from its encroaching surroundings.

Sometimes one has the experience of getting so involved in a picture, so close to it emotionally, that he is utterly incapable of telling whether he has anything worthwhile or not. In these cases it is best to lay the thing aside for at least a week, and get busy on something else. In the meanwhile the personal emotional confusion will subside, and the Will can make itself felt. When examined again, the picture in question will reveal itself as either a very poor thing or as something worth developing. Often the necessary change will be ridiculously obvious. But, if the thing is bad—tear it once across the middle, drop it in the waste basket and get busy on something else.

This exhortation to "get busy on something else" might well be taken as the first rule of self-discipline for pictorialists. The immediate need of amateurs is that they know less and do more. To accomplish anything with photography it must be accepted as *work to be loved*—not as a toy to be played with, nor as drudgery to be endured. Too many amateurs are playing with Photography, and not enough practicing it.

The second rule for self-discipline is: Don't flatter yourself. It is all right to let your friends flatter you, but don't let yourself be puffed up in your own estimation. We all like to receive praise, and it is perfectly permissible to smirk self-consciously and to murmur disparagingly, "Oh, that's nothing," when your doting friends praise you extravagantly. But keep your sense of proportion. If you know your pictures are bad, admit it to yourself. If you think they have a small grain of merit, cherish that grain. But always bear in mind that no photographer living has begun to realize more than a small fraction of the possibilities of his medium. And no photographer living is worthy to touch the hem of the garment of one of the great masters of graphic art.

The third rule is: Seek the finer things. Don't be circumscribed by the prejudices and provincialities of your own craft. In the symphony hall, the art gallery, the library, you can learn more of the things that really matter in photography than in all the photo-

*In *Venus and Vulcan* (Camera Craft, 1934) I have discussed this matter of pictorial predilections in more detail, and have suggested a classification of material.

graphic books and technical manuals. Hearing great music, seeing great pictures, reading great books, we gradually lose a little of the smallness and cheapness from our souls, and draw nearer to those deep eternities wherein all arts are one.

The final rule is: Learn about the art of photography, not in camera clubs, but in silence and solitude. The average run of amateurs are gregarious animals, frightened at being alone, and more given to gossip than old maids. The first act of an amateur who has ambition to accomplish something should be to escape from this petty, polluted sewing-circle atmosphere, and to seek the clean air of the wilderness—even if he goes no further than his own back yard.

Silence and solitude—and much of both of them—are necessary to the creative worker. In silence he finds peace, and in solitude he finds himself. In the silence and in the solitude things assume their proper perspective, personal issues fade away, the great deliberate rhythms of nature become manifest—and he is cleansed and made a fitter channel through which the upward-striving Will-to-Form may realize itself.

A Note on the Notes

In describing the making of the pictures that follow, I have divided the material into two parts; the physical ingredients, and the back-ground of thought and idea. The physical ingredients or technical data are segregated, like the dirty lines in a certain school edition of Horace, so that those interested in such matters may refer to them with the least possible inconvenience.

The data lists contain reference to two procedures that pertain particularly to my own personal methods and were developed by me. These are the Texture Matrix and the Abrasion Tone Process. The Texture Matrix has been available to the public for the last year and a half. The Abrasion Tone Process, involving certain refinements of print finishing and control, has been supplied only to my pupils. Owing to the delicacy of the process and the extreme difficulty of adequately explaining it without demonstration, and owing also to the present impossibility of supplying the materials for it, no explanation of the process is attempted. However, in order that the data lists may be complete in all details, the process is mentioned in all cases where it is used.

It will be noted that nearly all the pictures have been made with a single brand of paper. This is to be construed rather as a personal habit than an exclusive recommendation. I am used to the Defender product, and find that it answers my pictorial needs. However, there are numerous other papers, such as Eastman P.M.C. or Agfa Brovira, which are very similar, and have proved to be equally useful. Let the amateur decide on *one* paper and stick to his choice. Whimsical experimentation with various printing papers is only a source of confusion and a grievous loss of time.

Many items appear in the data lists repeatedly. During the ten-year period covered by these pictures I have worked with a progressively smaller group of materials. In dealing with practical phases of photography my aim is to exploit to the fullest a *small group* of readily controlled and applicable processes.

Many amateurs who should be reading these words are now engaged in scanning the data lists with an eager and lustful eye. "Here," they are saying, "is How It Was Done." Could I reach them, I would answer something like this: No, Kiddies; this is not how it was done. The data are but the bone and gristle from which all good sustaining juices have been boiled away. The data lists are true in all details, but (for the person who wants to make pictures) they are the least valuable information that the book contains.

Cameras do not make pictures. Emulsions do not make pictures. Developers do not make pictures. Processes do not make pictures. Gammas, factors, and the abracadabra of the technician do not make pictures. Yet all that eventually counts with a photographer is whether he makes pictures.

Only when the very young art of photography recovers from its juvenile preoccupation with glittering irrelevancies, and gives over its effort to measure the universe in terms of focal lengths and to stipulate the sun's brightness in terms of Scheiners, can we hope that photographers will get down to the business of making pictures.

MONSTERS AND MADONNAS

Part One

CHARACTERS

Woman of Languedoc

Johan the Mad

Thunder

Rope Dancer

Machiavelli

Stamboul

Market Girl

THUNDER

THE pictures that follow are the result of about ten years' work. In those ten years I have made tens of thousands of exposures and completed hundreds of pictures. Some that appeared masterpieces the evening of their production were destroyed with loathing the following morning. Some lasted a week or a month before they were consigned to the ash-can. Some lasted several years before they began to annoy me. But a small group managed to hold up. From that group the following selection was made. Ten years from now, no doubt, I would wish to considerably revise this selection.

What are the elements that make a picture hold its own after the initial joy of carrying it through and completing it has evaporated? These elements appear to me to be three:

(1) A superior photographic rendering.
(2) A sound compositional scheme.
(3) Subject matter of universal significance.

Very often it is not altogether of our doing that these elements come to exist in our pictures. Rather, we owe it to the beneficence of the Will-to-Form. The composition that we labor over often turns out to be banal or freakish. And the subject matter that seemed to us so interesting becomes commonplace and empty after we have looked at it a few times.

In none of the pictures of the first group, which I have entitled "Characters," is there any effort at realistic representation, at portraiture of the conventional sort. Realism is, of course, a legitimate source of subject interest, but a very limited one. The fact that a picture is a speaking likeness of Mary Jones is of interest only to those who are acquainted with Mary. If the picture happens to reach a wider public, it is evident that it contains elements of wider significance than mere likeness. In the "Characters," of which the picture opposite is the first, there is represented in every case a recognizable universal type rather than an individual.

In *Thunder*, for example, is represented the primitive human awe in the presence of Nature. We all share this awe, despite our various degrees of sophistication.

This picture was not originally conceived with any such symbolism in view, however. It is a particularly good example of a picture working out its own destiny, almost in spite of the artist.

A thirteen-year-old girl came into my studio one day to sit for me. I had it in mind to make something pictorial, but had no very clear notion of what it would be. So I sat her down on a stool, put her under a "Basic" light, and began to take exposures. Her hair was neatly combed and she sat with Priscilla-precision. At my bidding she went through all the stock poses. She raised her eyes. She cast them down. She smiled brightly, happily, sadly, and thoughtfully. She simpered over her shoulder. She pouted. I was by this time well into my third dozen of exposures, and felt certain I had no picture yet. Maybe her dress was at fault. Something about the rugged contours of her face suggested a peasant type, so I tossed her a peasant blouse. When she had put this on, we got under way again. More exposures, but still no picture. By this time the model was getting weary and I was getting annoyed at the complete lack of any pictorial returns on my investment of exposures. It was necessary to do something to break the conventional and unproductive tenor of the sitting. On an impulse I suddenly and violently with both hands mussed the model's neatly arranged hair. She looked up, startled and indignant. Here, without warning, was the picture. I fled back to the camera. The violence of the action and expression was inappropriate to the Basic light, so I quickly shifted the first unit to the dynamic position. Three or four exposures, and the sitting was ended. I soothed the somewhat ruffled model and called it a day.

When looked at in proof form, the result showed picture possibilities. But it was obviously uncomplete. The elemental character of the image and emotion demanded an elemental background. A background of angular character, such as rocks and crags, would have been at variance with the voluminous curves of the central image. These curves suggested swelling, restless clouds, which in turn, taken in conjunction with the expression of the model, gave the key to the picture: "Thunder."

With a Wolfe BB carbon pencil various arrangements of clouds were made on the proof, until one was found which gave an effective framing of the head and placed a strong accent of contrast opposite the face.

The image was thoroughly inked, first with hard and then with soft ink. A still softer ink was mixed and laid in over the darker areas of the background, as determined from the cloud arrangement planned on the proof. Then, with a small hopping brush on a springer, the ink was removed from the lighter areas of the clouds. Finally, with a one-eighth-inch hopping brush, the edges of the clouds were carefully cleaned up and given definition.

The transfer was made on dry Croquille board. The usual spotting and slight intensification was made on the transfer.

DATA. Camera. Soho Reflex 3¼x4¼. Lens. Goerz-Dagor 7 inch.
Exposure. Approximately one-half second at f.11.
Film. Eastman Verichrome 1935.
Camera Distance. Approximately 5 feet.
Lighting. Dynamic Light with reflector.*
Developer. Methol-Borax (see data on *Stamboul*).
Time of development. One and a half hours.
Printing paper (for bromoil matrix). Defender Velour Black I.
Print developer. Amidol (see data on *Woman of Languedoc*).
Process. Bromoil transfer, with locally inked background.

*These notes assume familiarity with the author's *Projection Control* (Camera Craft 1934) and *Pictorial Lighting* (Camera Craft 1935)

WOMAN OF LANGUEDOC

THE identification of a picture with a universal type may take place in one of two ways. Sometimes the universal type is grasped and realized in advance, and the picture constructed to express it. Thus, to take a thoroughly banal example, if the theme of "motherhood" was to be presented, the artist would select for his model the most completely motherly looking mother that he could find, surround her with thoroughly childish children, and include a cradle or other poetic adjunct of maternity. Sometimes (and this is probably more frequently the case) the picture when completed is found to identify itself with a universal type in a way unrealized by the artist when he was making it. In the first case, the symbol is condensed into a picture; in the second case, the picture expands into a symbol.

The picture opposite was one of a lot resulting from some experiments with costumes in an outdoor setting. It stood out among the group because it seemed to mean more. It is far from being a mere realistic costume picture. In the stability of the figure, touching the ground firmly yet not bound down by it, in its buoyant health and the independent lift of the head, there seemed to be expressed something of the spirit of the peasants of the south of France. Hence the choice of the title.

The costume makes no pretense to authenticity. An authentic costume is nearly always bad pictorially. I have found that by working with a few limited "costume elements," consisting of a few simple skirts, blouses and scarfs, it is possible to construct a huge variety of costumes, which are more effective pictorially, and are actually more true to the spirit of the time and the place than the costume of guaranteed factual authenticity. The costume in this picture consists of three elements:

(1) A long underdress, combining petticoat and bodice, of colour just off white.

(2) A yellow drape. This was used for the apron.

(3) A white lace rag. Folded and laid on the model's head, this constituted the cap.

The figure was given a monumental dominance by the low position of the camera, which was held in the hand six inches from the ground.

A summer afternoon sun, diffused by a slight haze, furnished a light approximating the Plastic quality. The impression of Plastic light was further increased by the combination of Panchromatic film and K2 filter, which rendered the sky in a medium gray tone.
According to my habit in making bromoil transfers, I first "felt out" the pictorial possibilities of the subject on a small proof, making the tentative alterations with a BB carbon pencil.

In preparing the matrix for the transfer, the gray tone of the sky was further deepened by local printing. Some of the dark areas in the bushes were held back slightly by means of dodging. The matrix print for Woman of Languedoc was made with the No. 2 Texture Matrix. Traces of the texture remain after transfer. This was in the nature of an experiment. Generally speaking, an untextured print is preferable for the Bromoil process. The print was given normal exposure. It was allowed a full five minute development, in order that the image might penetrate clear to the paper base. This procedure is essential with a matrix to obtain complete rich blacks with a single transfer.

After laying in the image with hard and soft ink, a still softer ink was used to darken the sky areas. A No. 24 Sinclair brush was used for this purpose, and the very soft ink was gently laid into place. With a small hopping brush the shadow area of the dress was reduced, and a faint suggestion of branches was worked into the tree at the left. By the same means the shadow on the throat and breast was softened at the edge. Finally, distracting accents of light were subdued. These appeared originally among the rocks in the foreground and in the branches of the large tree.

This transfer, which was executed in sepia ink, was made on Croquille board.

I use the amidol developer, the formula of which appears in the data list, only in the preparation of bromoil matrices.

DATA. Camera. Leica, Model F.

Lens. Elmar, 50 mm., f.3.5.

Exposure. Approximately one-thirtieth of a second at f.9.

Film. Eastman Panatomic, 1935.

Condition of shooting. Camera resting on ground.

Camera distance. 18 feet.

Lighting. Afternoon sun, approximating "Plastic" quality.

Developer. Eastman D-76.

Metol	29 grs.
Sodium sulphite (desiccated)	3 oz.—145 grs.
Hydroquinone	73 grs.
Borax, crystals	29 grs.
Water to	32 oz.

Time of development. One hour and a half.*

Projection Control. Local printing. Local and general dodging. Texture Matrix No. 2.

Printing paper (for bromoil matrix) Defender Velour Black I.
Print developer. Amidol.

Water	16 oz.
Sodium Sulphite	77 grs.
Amidol	15 grs.
Potass. Bromide (10% sol.)	12 minims.

Process. Bromoil Transfer.

*This departure from conventional developing practice, which applies to all the pictures in this book, is explained in *Projection Control*, Chapter Three, and *Pictorial Lighting*, Chapter Four.

ROPE DANCER

THERE has been a time in everyone's life when the circus was the utmost end of his yearning. It was glamour, adventure, romance. It was escape from this sordid every-day existence into a glittering world where all women were beautiful, and all men were paragons of strength and bravery. This glamour and romance, this adventure and escape, are still sought after. So the circus remains the symbol of a childhood dream that few of us outgrow.

In particular, the performer on the tight rope, who walks easily over dizzy heights, who laughs at the impossible with mocking grace, is a symbol of a free spirit yearned after by all those conditioned by material things and halting skill.

Among artists who have turned to the rich and lively movement of the circus for their material we may mention Picasso and Toulouse-Lautrec. In the case of the latter, the significance of the circus as an avenue of escape is especially evident; for a large proportion of the pictures of his well-known series were made during a period when he was confined for a mental disorder.

The theme of the rope dancer gave me a chance to put to pictorial use an old device of trick photographers. This consists in photographing, against a horizontal background, figures that are presumably upright. Thus the illusion is given of figures floating in midair or hanging lightly suspended. By this means were made, a good many years ago, numerous more or less comic pictures of people falling off of ladders, etc. The device was sometimes used in the early cinema when the hero was obliged to scale the precipitous front of a sky-scraper.

Since making this picture, I have further experimented with this effect. In so doing, I have considerably improved on the rather crude mechanical makeshifts that were then employed. However, I describe the making of this picture just as it took place, since others may not have any more material available than I had at that time. It is perhaps significant that, with my improved equipment for making such shots, I have not been able to obtain a picture that pleases me as well as this one does.

It is necessary to spread something on the floor to take the place of the white background. For this purpose white oilcloth was used. This material proved to have certain practical disadvantages which will presently be mentioned. For later experiments I have used a couple of pieces of mattwhite wall board.

A black light cord served as the rope. In order to get the umbrella close enough to the body, it was necessary to cut off part of the handle.

In posing the model, constant care was demanded to prevent rumpling and soiling the oilcloth.

The camera was placed on a nearby table, with the tripod extended to its fullest. To operate the camera, I mounted a chair placed on the table. From this precarious perch it was possible to shoot down at an angle of about sixty degrees. The aberration resulting from this angle proved advantageous, since in the finished picture it increased the impression that the figure loomed in the air overhead.

A balanced lighting was essential, owing to the need of avoiding shadows on the background. The "Contour" lighting seemed to solve the shadow problem best, and served to give best possible accent to the exceptionally fine legs of the model. Since there is no distance between the subject and the background, it is of course impossible to use a rear unit in the manner of the usual set-up for the Contour light.

The proof of the original print (reproduced on this page) shows at once the faults of the oilcloth background and the corrections that were required in making the bromoil transfer. Despite considerable care, the oilcloth shows many wrinkles. Every wrinkle is marked not only with a shadow, but with a bright high-light. In addition, there are numerous cast shadows on the background which must be removed. On the matrix the usual "lay in" of hard ink was given with the electric brush. Detail in the umbrella and half-tones in the flesh areas were supplied with softened ink. Then with a tight half-inch hopping brush the double image of the rope was reduced to one and straightened at the same time. By the same means the shadow of the body was removed from the background, and all the grey half-tones of the shadows of the wrinkled oilcloth were "hopped out."

The decorative quality of the composition was improved by lengthening the hair. This was done with soft ink on quarter-inch brush.

The final transfer was made on dry Croquille. It was given the usual spotting and slight intensification.

DATA. Camera. Leica, Model D.

Lens. Elmar 50 mm., f.3.5.

Exposure. Approximately one-half second at f.9.

Film. Eastman Panatomic, 1934.

Conditions of shooting. Downward shot from camera above model.

Camera distance. 14 feet.

Lighting. Modified "Contour." (See comment above.)

Developer. D-76. (See data on *Woman of Languedoc.*)

Time of development. Two hours.

Printing paper (for bromoil matrix). Defender Velour Black I.

Print developer. Amidol. (See data on *Woman of Languedoc.*)

Process. Bromoil transfer with control.

JOHAN
the Mad

JOHAN THE MAD

AN HISTORICAL character is of interest as pictorial material only as it may be regarded as a symbol, as an exemplification of a universal type. Individuals are remembered in history only to the extent that they have entered the common consciousness as symbols. Consequently, details of faithful likeness are of secondary importance. The colour of Lucrezia Borgia's eyes, the shape of Napoleon's ear, the angle of Caesar's profile, are of small moment compared with the *ideas* that these names represent. To give concrete and effective portrayal to these ideas is the aim of the pictorialist who deals with historical characters.

In the case of the present picture, *Johan the Mad*, I am not sure that I have ever seen a contemporary likeness of poor Johan of Castile. But the literal facts of how Johan looked—the colour of her eyes and hair, the shape of her nose—are of small consequence. By her crazy tragic journey through the kingdoms of Europe, bearing with her the corpse of her beloved husband, she has come to be a symbol and prototype of the tortured quest for something irrevocably lost. If this picture relates itself to this symbol, the title is justified.

The picture was not created to fit the symbol. Rather, the title was suggested by the picture. Here is another instance of a picture occasioned by a happy accident.

After a long, unfruitful sitting, in which many exposures were squandered and no pictures were obtained, the model was resentfully removing her make-up and I was disgustedly stowing away my camera. The model had twisted a towel around her head, had smeared her face with cold cream, and was glowering at herself in the glass. Suddenly, it was evident that here was a picture; not at all the picture that I had been trying all afternoon to get; but definitely a picture. A moment later, the model was back on the stool, the camera back on the tripod, and we were at it again. The model had on some quite irrelevant costume; to conceal it, she held in front of her a diagonally tilted piece of chipboard. This time the sitting was brief and to the point, a few exposures sufficing to record the variants required. There was no need of fumbling, for the picture and its emotional tendency were clearly visualized in terms of this specific model. A few slight changes in expression were tried. The expression chosen was strong and brutal to the point of actual distortion. The degree of distortion is evident when this picture is compared with *Youth* or *Woman of Languedoc*, which were made by the same model.

The architectural quality of the modelling of the face justifies the overpowering dominance given it by the extreme "choke shot." It is based on a few simple planes. There is complete lack of merely decorative or incidental detail. All elements contribute to the face and the thought behind it.

An interesting problem in empathy* is involved in the relationship of the twisted head-dress to the expression of the face of Johan. Definitely, this twisted mass contributes much to the emotional tone of the picture. It expresses in form the spiritual torture that the model's face betrays. The picture loses immeasurably when this element is eliminated, and becomes almost absurd when its emphatic quality is changed. To appreciate the power of this element, imagine the result of changing the tightly twisted knot to a flowing drapery that falls gracefully over the shoulder! The whole print would be weakened thereby, and the powerful expression would become a mere incongruous grimace.

This is a straight print. Aside from the use of the No. 1 Texture, no projection control was employed.

The lettering, carefully planned to the space, was added to the finished print with a BB carbon pencil. The combining of lettering with a picture is a very tricky matter, and, unless it can be correctly done, lettering is much better omitted. Lettering must be executed with a nice sense of space values, it must be photographic in its tonal quality, and it must be properly subordinated to the central image. The general procedure is as follows:

Lay in freehand guide lines very lightly with a lead pencil. Then, in the same way, indicate the spacing of the letters and lightly sketch them in. Trace gently over these sketched outlines with a BB carbon pencil, rectifying imperfections at the same time. Then, pressing down heavily on a vertically held BB pencil which has been freshly sharpened, go over the letters again to obtain a strong, clean-cut outline. Finally, with a kneaded eraser, go lightly over all the lettering until it takes its proper subsidiary place in depth of tone.

There are two general rules which will be found useful in securing the necessary subordination of titles. (1) Avoid ornate or elaborate design in the letters used, or any other flourishes that detract from the domination of the central image. (2) Whenever possible, let the first or last letter of the title be partially obscured by the image. By this procedure the lettering is placed in another plane in the picture, and is indicated to be of lesser importance. Note, in this regard, the placing of the title on *Youth*.

DATA. Camera. Soho Reflex 3¼ x 4¼.

Lens. Goerz-Dagor 7 inch.

Exposure. Approximately one-fifth second at f.8.

Film. Agfa par-speed Ortho film pack, 1931.

Camera distance. Five feet.

Lighting. Modified "Basic."

Developer. Glycin, regular formula.

Water	1 gal.
Sod. Sulphite	2½ oz.
Glycin	½ oz.
Sod. Carbonate	2½ oz.

Time of development. Two and a half hours.

Projection control. Printed with Texture Matrix No. 1. Dodging in.

Printing paper. Defender Velour Black I.

Print developer. Eastman D-64, B. solution. (See data on *Machiavelli*.)

Treatment of print. Intensification with Abrasion-Tone process.

*The element of empathy is defined and further discussed in the notes on *Portrait of a Young Girl*.

MACHIAVELLI

THE historical characters that mean the most to the general public (and are therefore most valuable from a pictorial point of view) are those that have come to be universal types, just as recognizable and just as significant in our day as in theirs. Casanova, for example, has ceased to be a man and has come to be an idea. In pictorial terms he would be represented as one who would be just as efficient in a modern penthouse as he was in Henriette's boudoir. Similarly, Niccolo Machiavelli would fit into a cutaway and top hat and—with the same non-committal smile and purposeful obsequiousness—attend the diplomatic sessions at Geneva.

The picture of *Machiavelli*, in utter contrast to the history of *Johan the Mad*, was planned and carried out to be what it represents. It was originally suggested, I think, by the facial lineaments and slightly sardonic expression of the model. These strongly reminded me of the qualities of the almost legendary diplomatic plotter and political adviser of the Borgias. The picture was planned in detail, both in composition and thought, in a series of conferences with the model.

The chosen form of presentation was that of a typical portrait of the period—a dominating half-length figure arranged on pyramidal lines, carrying a single small attribute, with a simple conventional landscape for a background.

In further contrast to *Johan the Mad*, some effort was made to secure a likeness to the original, Niccolo's face being more familiar than Johan's. However, only a small amount of make-up was used. Its function was to add the final touch of verisimilitude to an already established characterization. In accordance with hints given by several contemporary portraits of Machiavelli, the model's own eyebrows were blocked out with grease paint, and narrower and more arched brows were drawn in. The cheeks were hollowed by delicately blended shadows. Added width of the cheek bones was suggested by small high-lights of cold cream. The thinness of the lips was emphasized by rouging them for their full length.

As in the case of *Woman of Languedoc*, the costume for this picture was assembled from a few simple "costume elements" of tested photographic effectiveness. The dark yellow brocaded drape that forms Niccolo's voluminous cloak appears reversed as the apron in *Woman of Languedoc*. The cap is a piece of black velvet, folded and laid on the head.

A considerable number of exposures was made, embodying slight variants from the basic idea. But the established characterization was maintained throughout. The final choice was made from several nearly similar proofs because of the particularly happy arrangement of the hands.

The landscape background was accomplished by a montage of two additional negatives, one of hills and one of clouds.* The principal negative was printed first. Note that the nearly opaque background resulting from use of the Basic Light effectively protects the surrounding areas from exposure. For the sake of additional accent of contrast near the center of the picture, the cap was locally printed darker with the use of the aperture board. In making the montage, the exposed area of the principal image was shielded with a cardboard cut-out held in the hand. The montage negatives should be printed considerably lighter than the principal image in order to establish the impression of another and subordinate plane. Finally, with all negatives removed from the projector, the print was given a general dodging in to blend the images and to darken the outer areas of the picture.

The Abrasion-Tone Process was employed to intensify certain passages. By hopping out the tone, the cloud on the left was made to conform to the *photographic* cloud on the right. The narrow white collar was added by abrasion.

At this time also was inserted the detail of the small string that hangs down from the hat. This string adds a slightly whimsical accidental touch that is oddly in key with the feeling of the rest. The picture is definitely weakened by removing this detail.

DATA. Camera. Soho Reflex 3¼ x 4¼.
Lens. Goerz Dagor 7 inch.
Exposure. Approximately one-half second at f.8.
Film. Eastman Verichrome, 1935.
Camera distance. About five feet.
Lighting. "Plastic."
Developer. Metol-Borax. (See *Stamboul.*)
Time of development. Two hours.
Projection control. Montage of background. Texture Matrix No. 2.
Printing paper. Defender Velour Black I.
Print developer. Eastman D-64 B solution.

Stock Solution No. 1.

Water (about 125° F.)	64	oz.
Metol	270	grs.
Sodium Sulphite (Des.)	4½	oz.
Hydroquinone	300	grs.
Sodium Carbonate (Des.)	3½	oz.
Potassium Bromide	140	grs.
Cold water to make	1	gal.

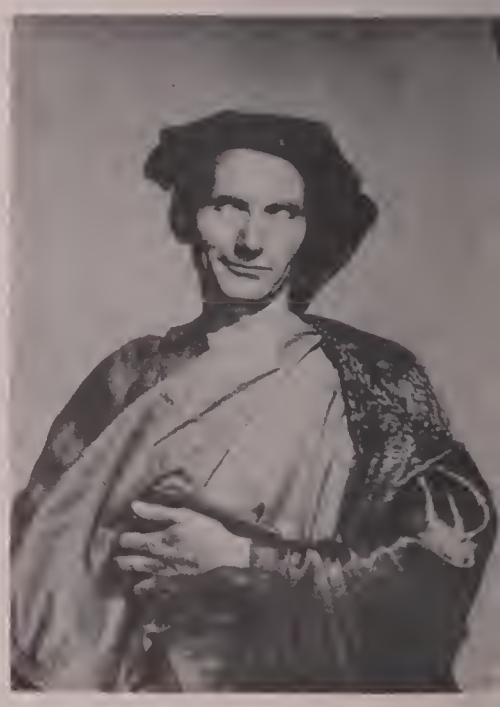
Stock Solution No. 2.

Water (about 125° F.)	64	oz.
Sodium Sulphite (Des.)	4½	oz.
Hydroquinone	2½	oz.
Sodium Carbonate (Des.)	3½	oz.
Potassium Bromide	140	grs.
Cold water to make	1	gal.

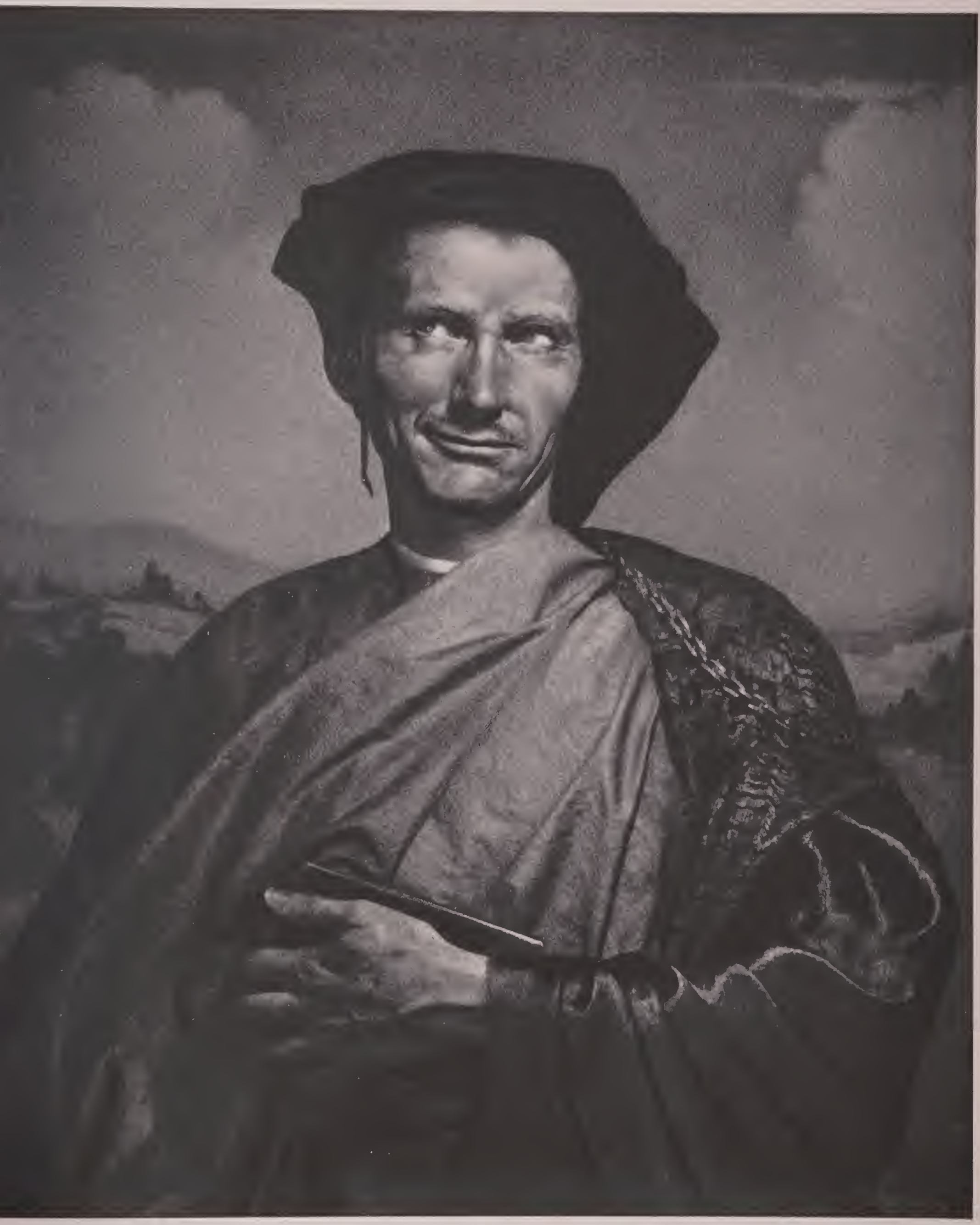
For use dilute as follows:

A—SOFT.	
Stock Solution No. 1	12 oz.
Water	20 oz.
B—MEDIUM.	
Stock Solution No. 1	6 oz.
Stock Solution No. 2	6 oz.
Water	20 oz.

Treatment of print. Intensification with Abrasion-Tone process.



*For additional material on Montage see *Projection Control*, Chapter Nine.



STAMBOUL

CHARACTERISTIC of the near East is this type of sexuality—joyless, defiant, and predatory. The cafe dancer of Stamboul does not exult in the joy of the flesh—as our healthier Western habit is—but bears its weight languidly. Restraint is there, but it is the restraint of a sleepy tiger. Her hand ever hovers near her dagger.

Whenever the flesh becomes a burden, this type makes its appearance. So in the days since the War this type has become commoner in the Western world. Boredom, over-sophistication, have often served to convert sex into a drug. Desire becomes a nightmare through which the joyless spirit wanders lethargically.

The general idea of this picture was planned in advance. This particular composition, however, was the result of rather extensive experimentation at the time of shooting. At least five dozen exposures were made on this occasion.

Like the rest of the pictures in this group, the costume was assembled from a few simple, conventionalized "costume elements." It happened that only two daggers were available. Two is nearly always an inconvenient number to handle in a composition, being neither a group nor an individual. So a screw-driver was pressed into service and stuck into the girdle along with the other two weapons.

On the contact proof the pictorial possibilities of the print were carefully checked in advance, and, with a BB carbon pencil, the background detail was sufficiently worked out to serve as a guide in inking the bromoil matrix.

The general procedure in inking was very similar to that followed in making *Thunder*. The image was laid in, first with hard and then with soft ink. With a still softer ink on a No. 24 Sinclair brush, the general dark areas of the background were added. The dark detail in the background was put in with soft ink on a bit of kneaded eraser worked to a sharp point. This device gives sharper definition than is possible with a brush. Then, with a quarter-inch hopping brush, the lighter details were worked in, the sharpest accents of light being hopped out with a rubber point. At this time also, the necessary changes were made to convert the screw-driver into a dagger.

The transfer was made on dry Croquille board.

DATA. Camera. Soho Reflex 3¼ x 4¼.
Lens. Goerz-Dagor 7 inch.
Exposure. Approximately one-half second at f.8.
Film. Eastman Verichrome, 1934.
Camera distance. Ten Feet.
Lighting. "Plastic."
Setting. White background.
Developer. Metol-Borax.

Metol	177 grs.
Hydroquinone	153 grs.
Sod. Sulphite	1 oz.—119 grs.
Borax	2 oz.
Water	1 gal.

Mix, in order given, in water at 100° Fahrenheit. Not to be diluted. Develop negatives between 60° and 70° Fahrenheit.

Time of development. One and one-half hours.
Printing paper (for bromoil matrix). Defender Velour Black I.
Print developer. Amidol. (See data on *Woman of Languedoc.*)
Process. Bromoil transfer with locally inked background.

MARKET GIRL

THIS picture owes its origin to nothing more significant than a pleasing display of vegetables seen in a market. Here were properties of a very decorative nature. Taken in conjunction with a female figure of a peasant type, they constituted a symbol of rich, earthy fecundity.

Here, then, was the picture, a Madonna of the Fields, laden with the rich produce of the land. Since the picture, as it was visualized, called for considerable exterior background, it was planned in terms of the paper negative technique. A tall grey box was included in the picture for later conversion into a wall.

Correctly understood and handled, the paper negative is one of the noblest processes available to the pictorialist. It is employed by Echague, who is probably the outstanding pictorialist of these times. The scope it provides for selectivity and control is only slightly less than that afforded by the bromoil transfer. Indeed, I have found in working with pupils that it affords the best possible preliminary training for the latter process. Not only are the facilities for local alteration similar, but a similar type of original print is required. A print that is correct in quality for a paper negative is also suitable for being converted into a bromoil matrix.

It is failure to recognize this quality that is responsible for many bad paper negatives. The basic simplicity and inexpensive nature of the process attracts many amateurs to it. Results are usually bad and the process gets the blame, when the fault lies with the quality of the print. Note that the original print (from a 35 mm. negative) is amply supplied with half-tones, and there is nowhere in it an extreme contrast of black and white. It is necessary that the print be not over-exposed and that it be developed at least four minutes in the A solution of D-64, one-quarter strength.

With a dried and pressed 11 x 14 enlargement we proceed to make the desired alterations. Work with pencil on the face of the print and with transmitted light. Use a medium Venus pencil for detail and a BB carbon pencil for broad passages where intense black is required. A stump may be used to accomplish gradations of tone. Begin working with the head. Do not make the error of starting with the background, lest you lay in the tone too dark. The head and figure as the dominating element in the picture must determine the tonal key of the other planes in the picture. Emphasize the shadows, rounding the contour of the head and the orbits of the eyes, and filling in between strands of hair and badly placed light passages. If it is necessary to get extremely intense blacks, turn the print over and work on the back also. Remember that it is the transparency value of this print that is of importance, not the surface appearance.

Proceed down the figure, adjusting the drapery, and shadowing the breasts slightly to emphasize the modeling of the body. Notice (by comparison with the final print) that the vegetables in the lower corners are considerably lowered in tone to lead the eye into the center of the picture.

When the key tone of the dominating plane of the picture is established, begin work on the next plane, which in this case is the timber and stone wall. Keep this plane in a lighter tone than that of the figure. The other planes are built up in order, with progressive lightening of tone. The sky is darkened inward from the edges to bring the strongest contrast opposite the head.

To make the paper negative, lay this altered print in the printing frame, *emulsion upward*, press it into close contact with the glass and lay a piece of F paper over it, *emulsion down*. Before locking up the frame, be sure that the two papers are in absolute contact, for any bubbles or bulges are disastrous. Give it an exposure commensurate with four minute development.

The paper negative thus obtained shows some increase in contrast; but, thanks to the softness and gradation of the original print, the increase is not detrimental. At this stage, incorporation of light passages is accomplished. As with the original print, the work is started on the principal plane of the picture. The detail of the hair is renewed and the high-lights on the face are intensified. The modeling of the body beneath the dress is suggested by a few high-lights. The neck-line of the dress is lightened and nearly elided in order to pull the light passages together. For the same reason the embroidery pattern on the right shoulder is considerably subdued. High-lights are intensified on the sash, on the fingers and on the vegetables in the foreground. Notice also that the bad fold breaking the line of the right sleeve is eliminated, and a slight correction is made of the disagreeable foreshortening of the fingers of the left hand. Detail and character are given to the confused mass of foliage at the left. Passing then to the other planes of the picture, the high-lights are intensified on the stones in the wall, and the sky is slightly brightened near the head.

The procedure for making the final print is the same as that described for making the negative, and observes the same rule of exposure and development. In printing, the principal figure may be given increased dominance, if desired, by "dodging" with the negative removed.

DATA. Camera. Leica, Model D.

Lens. Elmar 50 mm., f.3.5.

Exposure. Approximately one-half second at f.9.

Film. Eastman Panatomic, 1934.

Camera distance. Approximately 8 ft.

Lighting. "Basic."

Setting. White background with tall grey box.

Developer. Supersoup.

Time of development. Two hours.

Printing paper. Original positive and paper negative, Defender Velour Black F. Final print, Velour Black I.

Print developer. Eastman D-64, A solution, one-quarter strength.

Treatment of print. Abrasion-Tone.

Process. Paper negative.

MONSTERS AND MADONNAS

Part Two

N U D E S

Fragment

Figurehead

Youth

Nude Study

Portrait of a Young Girl

Frou-Frou

Cinderella

FRAGMENT

THIS picture and the six next following illustrate a variety of treatmcnts of the nude.

To the graphic arts the nude human body affords an unending series of plastic problems of composition and dcsign. For photography the nude is particularly apt matcrial. It offers a subjcct of great plastic variety and of nearly uniform color. It thus affords, when properly illuminated, an infinite variety of half-tones unspoiled by harsh contrasts. Such a subject is, of coursc, perfectly adapted to the peculiar limitations of the photographic mcdium.

Despite this natural affinity, there has bcen a great deal of vcry bad photography of the nude. Early photographic efforts at representing the nude were deeply tinged with Victorian pudicity. These were the days in which early morning mists and discrcet distance prevented shocks to sensitive natures, and the ubiquitous yard of *crepe de chine* served noticc on the carnally-minded that this was Art. Diffusion lenses dispelled everything except the vaguest suggestion of the human form, and the gum-bichromatc process completed the job. If a photographer in those times happened to catch Isadora Duncan and a haystack in the same picture, an ingenious person could tell which was the haystack.

One reason for the exccssive use of diffusion by this school of nude photography was the camera's embarrassing tendency to unpleasant realism. This tendency still harasses the photographer. Many a picture that has started out to be a nude has proved merely to be the photographer's wife without any clothes on. Personality is an exceedingly dangerous ingredient to admit into the representation of the nude, and must be rigidly excluded from any *plastic* representation of it.

The picture on the opposite page probably represents the logical limit in de-personalizing a nude—the converting of a living body into the semblance of a fragment of statuary. The picture was deliberately undertakcn in a mood of reaction against the so-called nudes that were merely a very specific lack of clothes. This reaction brought forth the technical solution of the problem.

Before the sitting, the model covered herself with a thin coat of flesh-coloured liquid whiting. This served to reduce all variations of local colour. Conspicuous hair on the body should be shaved. If it is desired to use the head in the picture, the eyebrows should be covered with surgical tape before the whiting is applied. All properties, drapes, etc., must be of the same tone (photographically) as the flesh. An oyster-coloured drape was used in this picture.

After careful posing of the model, it was determined where the fractures of arms and neck should be located. Thesc points were marked with strips of passe-partout, frayed along onc edge. The frayed edge must be turned toward the body. Notc that the model may not be poscd so that a severed member crosses in front of any other part of the body. The set-up for a similar experimcnt with a male figure is shown in the cut on this page. Owing to alterations on the negative, it is impossible to show the earlier condition of *Fragment*.

The "Dynamic" light with black background, which was used with this picture, is the only one suitable to this purpose.

When the negative was developed and dried, it was subjectcd to local reduction with permanganate. The ncgative was laid emulsion up on an illuminated ground glass and the permanganate solution* was carefully applied to the arms and head of the image with a No. 2 sable brush. Begin at the extremities and work toward the strips of passe-partout. These black strips, transparent on the negative, prevent the solution from "bleeding." The frayed edges render thc irrcgular contour of broken marble.

The reduction of thc emulsion is completc when the permanganate turns reddish brown. Immerse the negative in hypo until cleared, then wash and dry as usual.

The nicks and scars are added with a sharp blade.

The final alteration of the negative was made with Alvord's "Opaque." With it were added the high-light and thickness at each of the fractures. Small high-lights were put in the nicks also by the same means. Care must be taken that the position of the high-lights conforms to the direction of the lighting of the figure.

The reduced portions of the negative are seldom of exactly the same density as the background. Vcry frequently vestiges of the original image remain. These matters are readily taken care of by a simple application of Projection Control in making the print—local printing with the use of the aperture board.

*Water . . . . . 1 oz.
Potassium permanganate . . . . . 1 gr.
Sulphuric acid (conc.) . . . . . 2 drops.

DATA. Camera. Soho Rcflcx, 3¼ x 4¼.

Lcns. Goerz-Dagor, 7 inch.

Exposurc. Approximately one-half second at f.11.

Film. Agfa par-speed Ortho film pack, 1930.

Camera distance. Ten feet.

Lighting. "Dynamie" light with black background.

Developer. Glycin, regular formula. (See data on *Johan the Mad.*)

Timc of development. Two hours.

Negative control. Local reduction with permanganate, use of Opaque. (Sec above description.)

Projection control. Local printing with aperture board. Printcd through Tcxture Matrix No. 2.

Printing paper. Defender Velour Blaek I.

Print developer. Eastman D-64, B solution. (See data on *Machiavelli.*)

Treatment of print. Abrasion-Tone and spotting.

FIGUREHEAD

AS A SURVIVAL of the Victorian bashfulness in the presence of the undraped body, some photographers, seeking a moral substitute for crepe de chine, have attempted to argue for the "purity" of their nudes. There is, they allege, nothing of the flesh in their presentation of the nude; photographer, model, and beholder have freed themselves, through the great purgation of art, from all the uneasy promptings of Sex. To all such noble protestations, of course, any sensible person responds with the irrefutable comment of a Bronx cheer.

Let us have no more of these prudish apologies. There is, indubitably, an element, a considerable element, of sex in the representation of the nude. There is also an element of sex in almost every work of art that is worth its salt. A work of art that is devoid of this great energizing influence is as epicene and as unpleasant to contemplate as a person similarly bereft. Sex is a force so subtle and profound that it must inevitably influence all activities of life. In art especially, which is so similarly compounded of emotional impulse and creative will, sex is bound to exert a profound influence. When sex may give the theme to a sonnet or a symphony, when to the youth in love the very stars set their courses by sex, it seems scarcely worth the trouble to disclaim sexuality in photographs of the nude (whether they be works of art or not).

All nature testifies to the universality of life fulfilling itself in life, the vital force forever boiling up into new and exuberant manifestations. "Mother of the Aeneadae, darling of men and gods, increase-giving Venus, who beneath the gliding signs of heaven fillest with thy presence the ship-carrying sea, the corn-bearing lands, since through thee every kind of living thing is conceived, rises up and beholds the light of the sun." Thus Lucretius addresses the creative force of the universe, symbolized as Venus, who constrains "each after its kind to continue their races with desire." This universal fruitfulness, this constantly reborn energy, finds its most complete and appropriate representation in the female figure. William Blake, to whom all nature appeared but a symbol, wrote as follows:

> "The pride of the peacock is the glory of God.
> The lust of the goat is the bounty of God.
> The wrath of the lion is the wisdom of God.
> The nakedness of woman is the work of God."

The illustration on the opposite page, and the one on the cover of this book, are neither of them, in the strict sense of the word, complete pictures. They are academic studies, tentative efforts at capturing in pictorial terms the universal symbolism of the nude that we have just been discussing. In order that a body may express this endless fecundity of sea and earth, it must be presented in rugged and craggy modeling, emphasizing all its rugosities and swellings. For this dramatic but impersonal rendering, the "Plastic Light" proved the most effective.

No whiting was used on the model's body. There is no effort to represent it as otherwise than flesh. "Depersonalization" is accomplished by symbolic rather than literal means. The Plastic Light is most effective if the skin has a slight sheen that gives added crispness to the high-lights. Ordinarily, the slight perspiration that comes from working under the lights is just right for this purpose. Should this perspiration be lacking, a similar effect will be attained if the model rubs her body with soap and water and lets it dry.

NEVER use oil to emphasize the highlights on a nude figure. The effect, though perhaps immediately startling, is cheap and tiresome. The body itself, instead of displaying those qualities of health and cleanliness that should be inherent in the nude, looks slimy, disgusting and unclean. Nor is the practice justified by any increase in photographic quality and modeling. On the contrary, oiling the body largely vitiates and contradicts the natural modeling of the figure. It gives you highlights, yes, fierce, hot highlights, but most of them in places where highlights have no business to be. A minimum of control was employed in making this transfer, particular pains being taken to preserve the medium gray tone of the background, so characteristic of the Plastic Light. It was possible through the added pungency of the blacks available with this process to give increased dominance to the modeling of the figure.

Torse, the picture on the cover, makes use of a property that appears in the majority of the nudes in this group. This is a white painted wooden box, six feet by two feet six inches by one foot six inches. It is of sufficiently light construction to be moved easily, and yet strong enough to serve as a seat. This device, for want of a better name, and possibly because it is white and empty and has no back, has come to be designated as a "Hollywood Coffin." As a neutral decorative element it is useful in many pictures. Placed upright, it is a smart and effective background for a picture of the fashion-plate type. Placed horizontally, it serves as a seat, or, with the model behind it, as a battlement or balustrade. Its straight rectilinear shape makes it a particularly apt foil for the display of the nude figure. Several examples of its use appear in the pictures immediately following.

DATA. Camera. Soho Reflex, 3¼ x 4¼.
Lens. Goerz-Dagor, 7 inch.
Exposure. Approximately one-half second at f.11.
Film. Eastman Verichrome film pack, 1935.
Camera distance. 8 feet.
Lighting. "Plastic" light.
Developer. Metol-borax. (See data on *Stamboul*.)
Time of development. One hour and a half.
Printing paper (for bromoil matrix). Defender Velour Black I.
Print developer. Amidol. (See data on *Woman of Languedoc*.)
Process. Bromoil transfer.

YOUTH

AMONG the doctrines promulgated by the Medieval churchmen, none has reached wider or lasted longer than that of denouncing the "flesh" as evil and loathsome and therefore to be hidden. Neurotic ascetics, flaming with a compensatory zeal kindled by their own abstinence, built up a complex against the naked human body that has endured in the Western world even till today. Odo of Cluny in the Tenth Century reviled in carefully chosen epithets all the beauty of the female body. "If we cannot bear to touch phlegm or filth even with the tip of a finger, how could we desire to embrace a bag of dung?" And with wonderment we read of female ascetics who bathed in the dark or in their shifts, lest they fall into temptation. To this same impulse may be traced the crime committed by the missionaries of the last century against the island peoples of the Pacific; simple beauty-loving races compelled under threat of punishment to become lisping prudes, walking to chapel in Mother Hubbards and cast-off Prince Alberts.

This movement against the innocent South Sea Islanders was perhaps the final manifestation of an impulse already somewhat discredited in the land of its origin. Although in Victorian England the forces of prudery held absolute sway, the character of this prudery had changed utterly since the days of Odo of Cluny. As Havelock Ellis points out, "The nineteenth century man who encountered the spectacle of white limbs flashing in the sunlight no longer felt like the medieval ascetic that he was risking the salvation of his immortal soul; . . . he merely felt that it was 'indecent.'" Already there was under way, especially in Germany, a movement toward a healthier, saner view of nudity. This movement is today bearing fruit. Compare our conventional swimming attire with the habits of the bather who, a hundred years ago in Victorian England, patronized a "bathing machine," a dressing room on wheels that was rolled out into the water. From this contraption the bather descended, completely sheltered by an awning that came down to the surface of the water, and in sedate privacy disported himself in the chill waters of the North Sea!

Although the movement has suffered much from the prurient curiosity of a section of the public and from the unseemly antics of a few publicity-seekers, the growth of "Nudism" is very significant as a symptom of a changing viewpoint. It may well be that this changing view-point is leading us to a new Renaissance of the plastic and graphic arts. "In all the arts," says Maeterlinck, "civilized peoples have approached or departed from pure beauty according as they approached or departed from the habit of nakedness."

Generally speaking, a strong impression of personality is out of place in the representation of a nude. Personality is felt to conflict with the *symbolic* and *plastic* implications of the nude figure. This condition of the avoidance of personality is a particularly hard one to meet in photography, owing to the realistic and literal habits of the camera. In the first picture of this group (*Fragment*) personality is excluded by the rather drastic means of mutilating the figure to remove the head, and by the suggestion that the figure is of marble rather than of flesh and blood. In *Figurehead* and *Torse* personality is excluded by the powerful stress given to the symbolic and plastic qualities.

In the present picture, *Youth*, two elements prevent the intrusion of disturbing personality factors. The first (and most important) is the emphasis on pattern, design and linear rhythm. The second is the fact that the model's eyes look down, rather than out of the picture. There is an element of challenge in eyes that meet the beholder's: in the presence of this challenge, of course, complete impersonality is impossible to maintain.

The composition is constructed on the basis of Hogarth's "Line of Beauty," a firm but feminine contour. The monumental, decorative effect is enhanced by the device of placing the camera on the floor. It will be found necessary to tilt the front of the camera upward: a small book will serve for this purpose. In order to correct the aberration in drawing arising from this position of the camera, it is necessary that the model lean forward slightly at the waist.

Such a pose as this makes great demands on the model. Only a model of exceptional ability and experience could accomplish it without any trace of strain. And only a model of the most perfectly proportioned figure could pass the test of a full front view from a camera on the floor.

Note the position of the feet. The placing of the feet is always a difficult problem in nude photography. If they are pointed at the camera they look like stumps; and if they are placed flat to the camera they look like flippers. When the camera is at floor level the problem becomes even more difficult. In this case, the position of the feet was carefully determined before the rest of the pose was established.

This is an example of "true high key," based on high-key subject matter and on lighting of Basic quality.* The conventional basic set-up was altered by moving the front lighting unit considerably to the left. In order to enhance the high-key quality, the print was given an exposure sufficiently short to permit of full development.

Note that the "Hollywood Coffin" appears in this picture, the end view in this case.

**Pictorial Lighting*, Chapter Nine.

DATA. Camera. Soho Reflex, 3¼ x 4¼.

Lens. Goerz-Dagor 7 inch.

Exposure. Approximately one-half second at f.11.

Film. Agfa par-speed Ortho film pack, 1930.

Conditions of shooting. Camera at floor level.

Camera distance. 14 feet from subject.

Lighting. "Basic" quality, plus small sky light.

Developer. Glycin. Same formula as *Johan the Mad.*

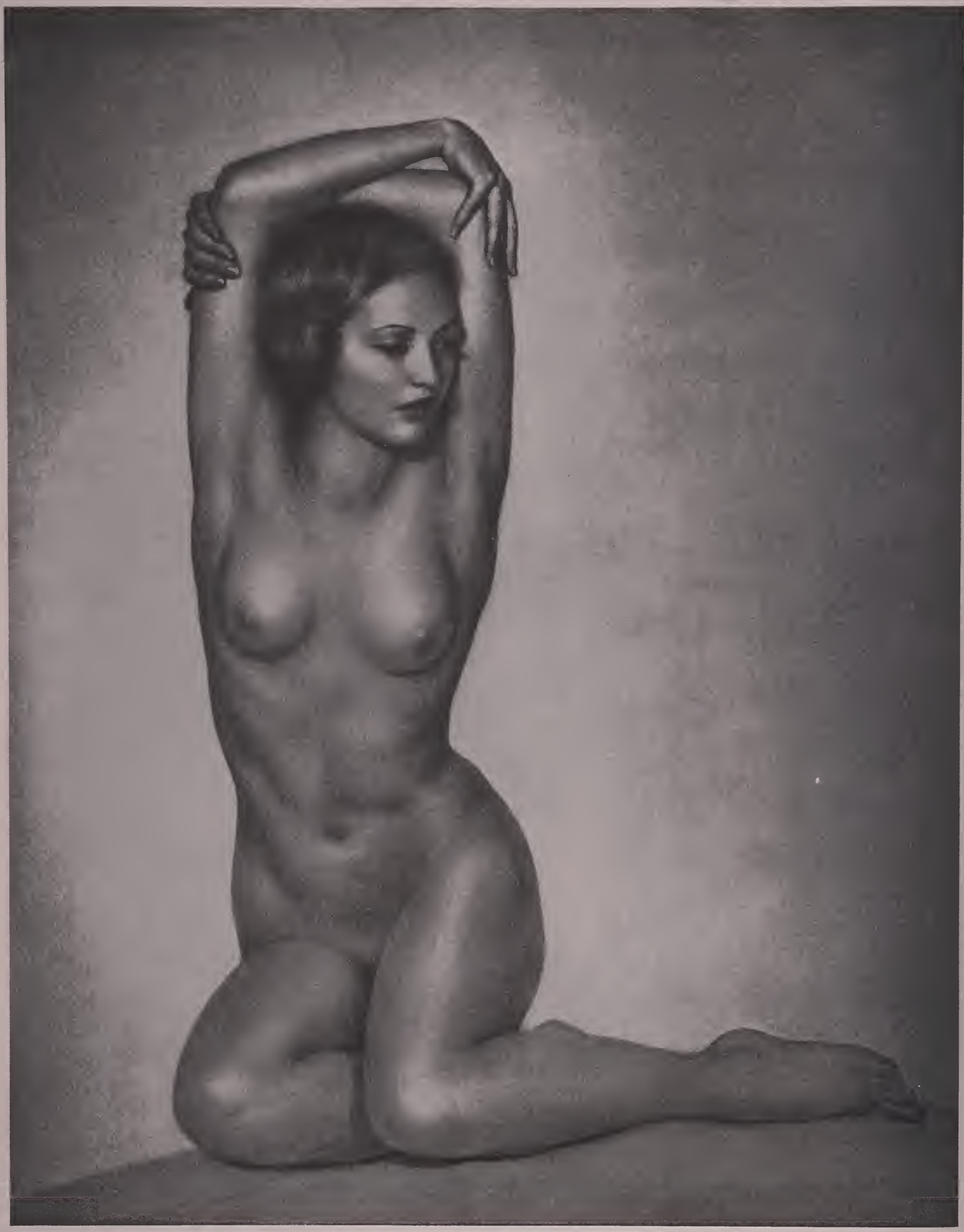
Time of development. Two hours.

Printing paper. Defender Velour Black I.

Print developer. Eastman D-64, B. solution. Formula in data for *Machiavelli.*

Treatment of print. Minimum of exposure, with development of at least three and a half minutes.

YOUTH



NUDE STUDY

HAVELOCK ELLIS has drawn attention to the significance of the fact that the gods of antiquity were always represented as nude or nearly so. Unquestionably an idea of divinity attaches itself to utter nakedness. It connotes freedom, escape from the conditioning of clothes, and the accidents of time and place. Clothes are rags of mortality that should not afflict the ever-living gods.

This god-like human body is the basic material of the graphic and plastic arts. Through the human figure, freed from the irrelevant comment of clothes, the creative impulse of art has found its noblest expression. And through it also (to speak the unhappy truth) have come to pass the cheapest and most degrading travesties of the art spirit.

It is small wonder that the public has become confused and unhealthy in its attitude toward the use of the nude in art when we consider that the two best known and most widely publicized examples of it have been "Stella" and "September Morn." When these fifth-rate specimens of the painter's craft—mediocre in execution and execrable in taste—were customarily extolled by side-show barkers as "masterpieces," it is not surprising that the public reaction (not so many years ago) to the mention of the nude art was either outraged respectability or lewd sniggers.

The public attitude toward photographic representations of the nude has been determined by even lower standards. The public mind cannot wholly dissociate the photographing of the nude from certain magazine advertisements that it has seen. "Art studies." "Glossy finished ACTUAL photographs, comprising in all 30 thrilling poses, made from French originals." "Photographs entirely Nude undraped and unretouched, in unusual positions." These advertisements are usually significantly flanked with others dealing with "Lost Manhood."

The amateur who undertakes the photography of the nude will find that he must be prepared to meet much perverted thinking, much false doctrine, misunderstanding and hostile opinion. These things he must ignore and go his own way in directness and sincerity. If he follows this path, he will avoid the faults of taste that have made nude photography a subject for back-room witticisms—crude realism, coyness, concealment, and sentimentality. Only by fine workmanship, by depth of understanding, by appreciation of plastic qualities, by honesty, may he pay his tribute to the divine in human form.

This picture is an example of the paper negative process.

The first essential in using this process is correct quality in the print used for conversion into the negative. (I find the use of a film diapositive a needless and limiting complication.) Many of the indubitably bad results that amateurs obtain from the process are due solely to wrong print quality. Not every print by any means, not even every good print, is suitable to be converted into a paper negative. There are three conditions that the print *must* meet if good results are to be secured. *Contrast must be avoided.* The tendency of the paper negative, as of most other processes, is to exaggerate contrast. Hence great care must be taken to secure and preserve all the middle halftones. There are three sources of contrast, all of which must be avoided. (a) It may be the result of excessively one-sided, unbalanced lighting. A lighting of Basic quality is much better for processing. (b) The contrast may be inherent in the local colour of the subject, with large areas of light and dark placed in juxtaposition. (c) Contrast may be of chemical origin. For this reason, when working with paper negatives, it is necessary to avoid contrasty emulsion on the original negative, as well as on the bromide print, and to avoid likewise contrasty developers for paper negative and print.

The softness of the original print and of the paper negative must be intrinsic and genuine. A sort of spurious softness is to be obtained by under-development. But a print thus secured will not produce a good paper negative. A print of the right type is only gotten by full development.

The original negative must be of correct quality. It must have been correctly lighted, correctly exposed, and correctly developed.*

Considerable control was employed in making this picture. On the original print (working with pencil and stump, as described in the notes on *Market Girl*) the facial expression of the model was altered by enlarging the lips and slightly changing the contour of the face. Shadow accents in the hair and along the body contours were darkened somewhat. The low curve supporting the body was added.

This altered print was converted into a negative in the manner described previously in connection with *Market Girl.* Further alterations were made on the negative. High-lights were intensified or added in the hair and on the forehead, breasts and legs. A slight shadow was removed from the white background. The original floor line (which came about waist-high, owing to the slight downward angle of the shot) was eliminated also.

*For discussion of "negative quality" see *Projection Control*, Chapter Three, and *Pictorial Lighting*, Chapter Four.

DATA. Camera. Soho Reflex, 3¼ x 4¼.

Lens. Goerz-Dagor, 7 inch.

Exposure. Approximately one-half second at f.8.

Film. Eastman Verichrome, 1933.

Camera distance. Approximately 12 feet.

Lighting. "Contour" light (with deeply tanned body).

Developer. Glycin. Formula in data on *Johan the Mad.*

Time of development. One hour and a half.

Projection control. Texture Matrix No. 2 on background only.

Printing paper. Original positive and paper negative. Defender Velour Black F. Final print, Velour Black I.

Print developer. Eastman D-64, A. solution one-quarter strength. Formula in data for *Machiavelli.*

Treatment of print. Abrasion-Tone.

Process. Paper negative.

PORTRAIT OF A YOUNG GIRL

THERE is one art concept derived from the theoretical aestheticians, rather than the practical artists, which is of real value and an aid in solving concrete artistic problems. This is the idea of "empathy."

This rather alarming word is the English version of the German *Einfühlung*, a term coined by Theodor Lipps. The meaning of "empathy" is less formidable than the word might indicate. The meaning of the word, and its precise relation to the act of looking at a picture, may perhaps best be gathered from the literal translation of the original German—*Einfühlung*, feeling-into. In looking at a picture, or any other work of art, we are all apt—if we have any imagination—to project ourselves into the work of art, to *identify ourselves* with what is going on in it. This feeling of self-identification may be sufficiently strong to create an actual physical sensation. Thus, looking at the pictured representation of Fujiyama by Hiroshige, we may feel ourselves *lifted* by the *rising* lines of the mountain. Or we may feel ourselves crushed beneath the weight of the entablature of the temple at Karnak. This "feeling oneself into the picture," this momentary identification of oneself with the subject, is what is known as empathy.

This concept will be found very useful in the study and criticism of pictures. We are all familiar with the phenomenon of the picture that for some mysterious and elusive reason is not right. Technically the picture is excellent, the material is presented well, there is no particular fault to find with the composition—yet it is all wrong. Frequently this shortcoming will be found to lie in *faulty empathy*—an empathy that contradicts the implications of the subject matter.

Owing to its intimate nature, there is more emphatic suggestion about the nude than any other subject matter. Hence the nude is particularly liable to faults in handling that are fundamentally nothing but bad empathy.

Had there been in *Youth*, for example, any evidence of strain on the part of the model, the picture would have lost immeasurably. The photographic quality might have been just as good, the physical proportions of the model unaltered, the linear pattern even better—yet it would not have been as good a picture. "Feeling outselves into" the picture, we would have been aware of the model's discomfort, and would have felt a correspondingly unpleasant reaction.

There are even grosser physical discomforts than muscular strain to which a model may be subject—all of which, when they appear, produce bad empathy—and bad pictures. Nudes of such bad empathy are—unhappily—rather frequently seen in photographic annuals and on the walls of salons. One sort is the greasy nude mentioned in the preceding chapter. Another sort is the sunburnt nude who exposes her lily-white limbs to the desert sun and treads the hot sands with reluctant feet. Yet another sort is the abraded nude who sits gingerly on rough stone or courts disaster among the brambles [illegible] chilly nude [illegible] reeds at the edge of [illegible] we suffer from a kindred [illegible] it is not quite polite to look at her.

[illegible] September Morn [illegible] pathic groomis [illegible] we suffer from a kindred [illegible] and feel that it is not quite polite to look at her.

In the discussion of [illegible] way of preventing [illegible] the plastic representation [illegible] direct glance of the [illegible] although the model's [illegible] a distinct impression [illegible] exists for two reasons. [illegible] ity in this picture, [illegible] features rather than [illegible] obvious awareness [illegible]

To me, the principal [illegible] equivocal touch supplied [illegible] She is the girl-woman, [illegible] consciousness of her [illegible] of boldness and prudery, [illegible] or flamboyant aggressiveness [illegible] destroyed the balance [illegible]

Technically, this picture [illegible] high key, built on [illegible] ing of Basic quality [illegible] ity, the "minimum [illegible] development" principle [illegible]

High-key representation [illegible] nudes and for pictures [illegible] *ininity* is to be emphasized [illegible] *Young Girl*, for instance, [illegible] tones in the hair instead [illegible] accents in black, all the delicacy of the picture would have been lost. In general, large amounts of black in a picture suggest heaviness and masculinity.

This is a straight print. Projection control was limited to a slight vignetting and dodging in.

DATA. Camera, Leica, Model D.
Lens, Elmar, 50 mm., f.3.5.
Exposure, Approximately one-fifth second at f.9
Film, Eastman Panatomic, 1934
Camera distance, 4 feet, 8 inches.
Lighting, [illegible] quality.
Developer, [illegible] Formula or data on [illegible] *tuedoc*
Time of development, Approximately ten hours.
Projection control, Local printing, Dodging in.
Printing paper, [illegible]
Print development, [illegible] 0.64, [illegible] Print is [illegible] on *Metinette*.
Treatment of print, [illegible] recommended [illegible] velopment.

FROU-FROU

GEORGE JEAN NATHAN has somewhere remarked that to the Englishman sex is beefsteak, while the Frenchman regards it merely as *hors d'oeuvres*.

The French as a race have an amazing gift for intellectual detachment. Affairs and issues that an Anglo-Saxon gets emotionally embroiled in, and which he messes up with sentiment and prejudice, a Frenchman regards in a clear, cold light. Under this light he perceives that many of these things are very pleasant and very amusing, but nothing to get apoplectic about. So he proceeds to smile at them, to enjoy them—and forthwith to forget them. A particular evidence of this detachment of the Frenchman is his well-known skill in setting forth in art the lighter and more amusing aspects of sex, and in enjoying them without blushes and without sniggers.

In the readjustment of ideas that has taken place since the War, the English-speaking races have found themselves veering towards an understanding of this viewpoint. Hence there has come to be an increasing appreciation of the lighter aspects of serious matters. And art with a *Vie Parisienne* accent, which twenty-five years ago would have placed one outside the pale, has come to be accepted and practiced.

Anglo-Saxons practicing this phase of nude art, being unaccustomed to it, and perhaps temperamentally still unreconciled to it, must assiduously cultivate lightness of touch. A bit of grossness, a bit too heavy an accent, a bit too much aggressiveness—and your caviare becomes corned beef. In thought, in action, in structure—the picture must conform throughout to the lightness of its intent.

In the first pictures of this group the intent was solely plastic. Personality was subordinated or obliterated as being incompatible with this intent. In *Frou-frou* the plastic quality is merely incidental. The personality element is primary, the direct challenge of the beholder by the subject. This altered intent calls for much more action and animation on the part of the model.

In this picture, and the one next following, there will be noted a use of *clothes* in combination with the nude figure. This use is only permissible in nudes of the lighter *Vie Parisienne* type, in which the provocative touch imparted by clothes is appropriate. With nudes of the plastic type, however, any suggestion of contemporary or period garments is unpleasant in the extreme and utterly destroys the plastic intent of the picture. The picture becomes an anomaly, being neither plastic nor amusing. At most, in plastic nudes, there may be permitted a drape of purely symbolic character. Such a drape may be employed only in a decorative manner: the moment that it becomes evident that the drape is being used for purposes of concealment, it becomes as unpleasantly suggestive as a model's hands that are too fortuitously disposed—and for the same reason.

In the original negative of Frou-frou the area above the breasts appeared as a flat, even tone, which would have printed too light. In making the print, the half-tones of this area were enriched by the use of local printing with the aperture board. The tone of the corners of the picture was slightly lowered by dodging in.

DATA. Camera. Soho Reflex, 3¼ x 4¼.
Lens. Goerz-Dagor, 7 inch.
Exposure. Approximately one-half second at f.11.
Film. Eastman Veriehrome, 1936.
Camera distanee. 6 feet.
Developer. Metol-Borax. Same formula as *Stamboul*.
Time of development. Two hours.
Projection control. Local printing with aperature board, dodging in, printed through Texture Matrix No. 2.
Printing paper. Defender Velour Black I.
Print developer. Eastman D-64, B. Solution. See data on *Machiavelli*.
Treatment of print. Normal exposure, full development.

CINDERELLA

THIS picture is the last of the nude group. Before leaving this topic, it scems well to make a few suggestions on a dclicatc problem that evidently vastly troubles a great many pictorialists. With some, it is more than a problem: self-consciousness, false standards of modesty, fear of public opinion, have built it up into a complex. The troublesome naturc of this matter has been indicated by numerous students of mine who have sought my advice on it, and have approached the issue with blushes and hesitations. In a few words, the problcm is: how to ask a model to pose in the nude. This, it seems, is a contingency that Emily Post has not provided for.

The fact that these students havc made such a portentous issue of the matter, that they built it up into such a blushful bugaboo, clearly proves that they had the wrong approach. As a matter of fact, there should be no more of an issue involvcd in asking a model to pose in the nude than in asking hcr to sit for her portrait. When both requests arc brought down to this same level, the probabilities are that she will assent to both, and for the same reason—she is flattered.

Under thcse circumstances, nearly every woman will consent to disrobe—unless she is deformed, or she suspects she is being made game of. All women delight in exhibiting their charms. This feminine tendency to exhibitionism, however, is not explicitly sexual. It is bascd rather on her desire to extend her conquest, and to prove that she, too, can win approbation. It is founded on egotism rather than on sex. The request to pose in the nude flatters her, and she flatters herself in acceding to it. She is eager to do so, *provided she is admired but not mauled.*

Failure to understand this point sometimes leads an inexperienced photographer to unwarranted assumptions. He interprets thc model's consent as a concession to him instead of as a tribute to hcrself. The subsequent disillusionment is gencrally very unpleasant for both parties.

The more rcadily a model consents to disrobe, the less sexual significancc thcre is to the act. A sixteen-year-old schoolgirl will doff her clothes without hesitation, and glory in it, and bask in the approbation that she mects; while a hardcned adventuress will fight thc suggestion to the last ditch. Clothcs are part of the latter's stock-in-trade, for she knows that thcy are much more specifically sexual than the nude body.

Bearing these matters in mind, the photographer approaching a model on this matter will be direct but delicate. He will come to the point in a matter-of-fact way, but will not fail to imply an appreciation of the model's qualitics. Let him not be too urgent, but remember that his request is half granted as soon as it is made.

Two of the pictures in this group make particular demands upon the physical qualifications of the model. In *Youth* the direct full-lcngth presentation of the figure demanded a perfect proportioning of all the parts. In *Cinderella*, of course, thc composition and idca of the picture demand a small and beautifully proportioned foot. The same problem of posing the feet is here involved that was mentioned in the discussion of *Youth*. Thc smallness and trimness of the feet (and of the shoe) are emphasized by turning them slightly toward the camera.

Note the quality of the Basic light in this picture. Owing to its rclatively short range of luminosity, it is able (when properly combined with the minimum of exposure and the maximum of development) to reproduce simultaneously the texture of the black stocking and the detail of the light area. The interesting "catch light" under the right breast is not derived from any additional light source. It is an occasional happy incidental effect of the Basic light, and is produced by reflection from the white background.

An important matter of empathy is involved in the posing of this model. Actually, most of her weight is resting on her right thigh, out of sight of the camera. Thus the contour of the left thigh and buttock is kept round and unbroken. Were the modcl sitting normally, the rcsultant flattening of these parts would produce an impression of grossness and weight entirely out of key with the thought of the picture.

The "Hollywood Coffin" will be recognized as a prominent element in this print.

DATA. Camera. Soho Reflex, 3¼ x 4¼.
Lens. Goerz-Dagor, 7 inch.
Exposure. Approximately one-fifth of a second at f.8.
Film. Agfa regular film pack, 1928.
Camera distance. Approximately 14 feet.
Lighting. "Basic" light.
Developer. Glycin, regular formula. (See data on *Johan the Mad.*)
Time of development. Two hours.
Projection control. Dodging in.
Printing paper. Defender Velour Black I.
Print developer. Eastman D-64, B. solution. (See data on *Machiavelli.*)

MONSTERS AND MADONNAS

Part Three

GROTESQUES

Preparation for the Sabbot

The Pit and the Pendulum

Human Relations

Belphegor

The Heretic

The Vampire

PREPARATION for the SABBOT

WITH this pieture we take our leave of the elear open air and eonventional understandable themes and pluuge into a world of murky shadows and primitive fears. This world is not peopled with the buteher, the baker, the eandlestiek-maker, nor any of their female relatives, but with the half-glimpsed figurcs that loom through the mists of our dreams and with troglodytie terrors that reaeh out toward us aeross the abyss of eenturies. Herein lies the reason for the equivoeal effeet of grotesque art on many people: the material is unfamiliar, and, by ordinary standards, unpleasant; yet it ealls forth a deep instinctive response. Thus they are torn between repulsion and attraetion. I have notieed many timcs that pcople, coming by ehance on a specimen of grotesque art in a gallery, do what the old-time movie directors ealled a "double take." That is, they pass over the pieture with a easual glanee, turn away from it, pause suddenly with a startled expression, and then return to it with incredulous intentness. The subject matter, at first meaningless, suddenly strikes home.

Elderly ladies (of both sexes) have often remonstrated with me for upsetting them with sueh horrid pietures. "The other day I saw such a sweet picture of a little boy blowing bubbles." Yet these same elderly ladies would pause, before leaving the gallcry, to further upset themselves with a final glance at the most sanguinary horror that was on view.

Everything exists through its opposite. For pictures of ealm and tranquil beauty to have any meaning, even for "sweet" pictures to have any meaning, it is necessary that the grotesque and the distorted exist. Perfection of form is signifieant only beeause the malforms exist also. Those who turn away from the grotesque are losing the riehness and eompleteness of artistie experienee.

A very fruitful field for grotesque art is afforded by the manifestations of witeheraft and demonology. Fear, seereey, and converse with evil powers, were eharaeteristie elements of this mysterious eult which is as old as man. These elements are of the very substanee of the grotesque. The early wood engravers did mueh with themcs derivcd from witeheraft. Brueghel has worked with this material; so also has Goya; but little has been done with it by photographers. Over-consciousness of the literal limitations of their medium has perhaps held some back from entering this unrealistic and imaginative field. But this very quality of unrealism should be a challenge to a photographer who wishes to pass beyond the conventionally aeeepted realism of the camera.

Some years ago I planned and partly carried out a "Pictorial History of Witeheraft and Demonology." This pieture and several others that follow belong to this series.

The preparation for the Sabbot has been a favorite and frequent theme of the artists who have dealt with this material. The young witeh, eager and exuberant, is being rubbed by the old witeh with a magie ointment. By the virtue of this salve, aeeording to tradition, the witehes were enabled to fly to their assemblies. Reginald Seot (1584) gives the formula for this ointment or "witch butter" as follows: "The fat of yoong children, and seeth it with water in a brasen vessell, reserving the thiekest of that whieh remaineth boilcd in the bottom, whieh they lay up and keepe, untill oeeasion serueth to use it. They put hereunto Eleoselinum, Aeonitum, Frondes populeas, and Soote."*

The mysterious setting was assembled from quite commonplace materials. A black baekground was used, of eourse. The strange hanging shapes were eomposed of torn strips of blaek tarlatan. Dimly seen in the baekground is a skull, supported on a tripod and draped with a dark cloth. The snake form in the foreground is the hose from a gas heater. Close examination will reveal the faet that my garbage ean funetioncd in this picture also. The euriously curved broomstick, whieh the young witch bestrides impatiently, was made from a palm braneh.

The old beldame, the important subordinate eharaeter in the composition, was played by the serub woman who eame in that day to clean. Without warning, and without ehange of eostume, she found herselfsuddenly thrust into a pieture.

This picture is one of very few in whieh I have made a successful composition with two figures. Such a comsposition usually results in an uneomfortable division of interest. But here there is no such divisiou. Thc old witeh is effectively subordinated, both by her inferior position, and by her lesser illumination.

*Those who can't resist new developers might try *this* formula some time. I am sure it is as good as some others.

DATA. Camera. Soho Reflex, 3¼ x 4¼.

Lens. Zeiss-Tessar, 7 ineh.

Exposure. Approximately one-fifth second at f.8.

Film. Agfa par-speed Ortho film paek, 1927.

Camera distanee. Approximately 14 feet.

Lighting. "Dynamie" light with aluminum refleetor.

Setting. Blaek background.

Developer. Glyein, regular formula. (See data on *Johan the Mad.*)

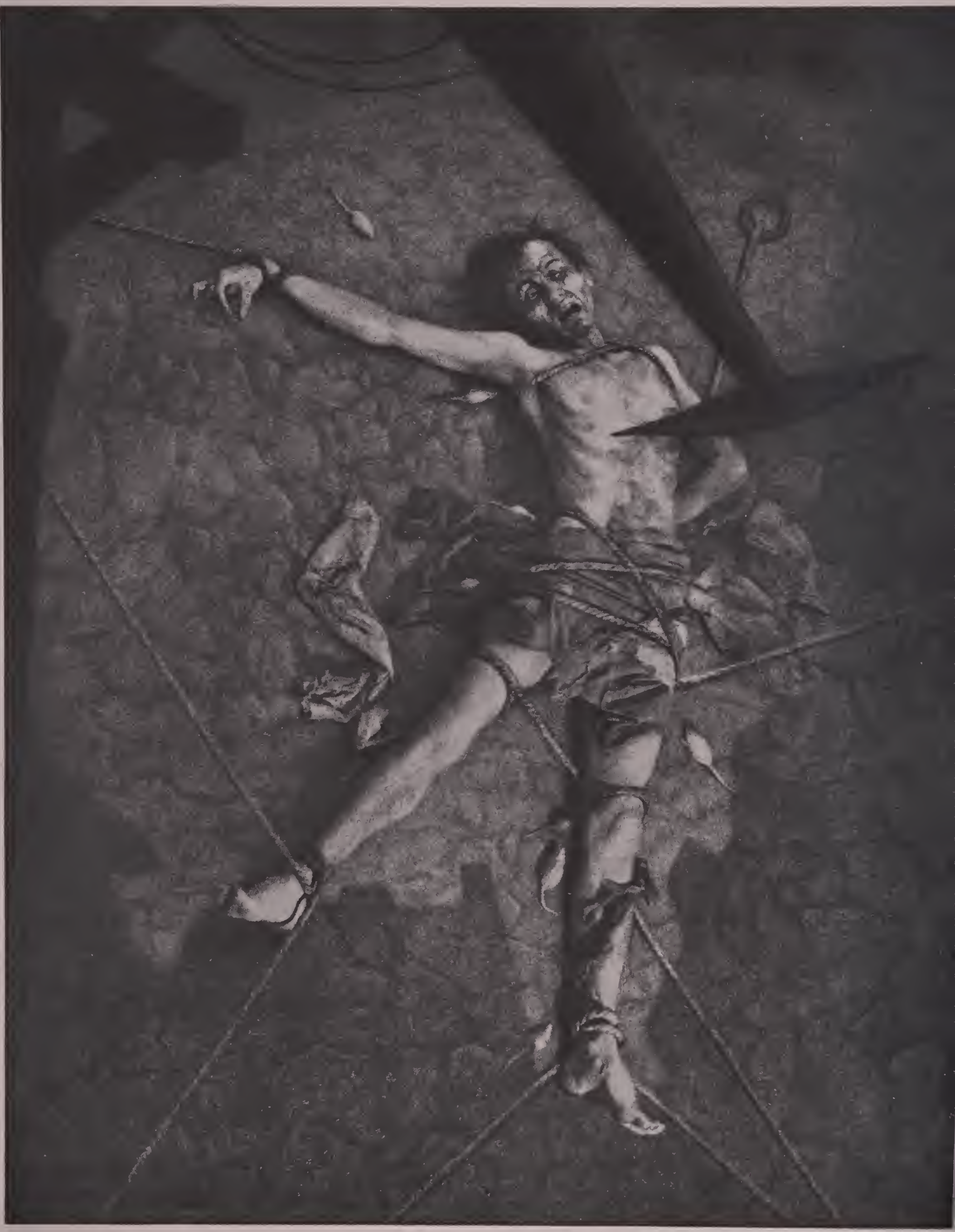
Time of development. One and a half hours.

Projection eontrol. Normal spot printing with dodging in.

Printing paper. Defender Velour Black 1.

Print developer. Eastman D-64, B. solution. (See data on *Machiavelli.*)

Treatment of print. Abrasion-Tone Process.



THE PIT AND THE PENDULUM

THE word "grotesque" is derived from the same root as "grotto." Thus the grotesque art is, in its origin, closely connected with the rites of deities that were worshipped underground. Much of this original significance still clings to it. The old, old fears are still with us, despite the braggadocio of our modern learning. Fundamentally we still fear the winged terrors that hover in the darkness, we shrink from the black mystery of the grave. Herein lies the abiding fascination of grotesque art; for we are inevitably drawn by that which we fear, and cannot take our eyes from that which terrorizes us.

There are, however, other motives affecting the use of the grotesque in art. One motive, nearly as old as the basic element of fear, is *propitiation*. By giving a concrete artistic form to the fear that obsesses us—by giving it a definite time and place, so to speak—we are enabled to lessen its power over us.

Another important motive in grotesque art is *hatred*. There is inevitably a close relationship between hatred and fear. So in dealing with that which we hate, we are very apt to turn to the grotesque. The hate motive in grotesque art will be discussed at greater length in connection with the "propaganda picture," *Human Relations*.

A more sophisticated and modern motive for the grotesque is found in an attitude that we may call "intellectual sadism." The artist, in other words, enjoys the shock that his pictures inflict on his public. This rather trivial motive, I confess, has encouraged me in my indulgence in the grotesque. I take malicious pleasure in observing the horrified reaction of the innocent spectator as he comes unwarned on a picture that strikes past his guard of polite tolerance.

A sounder and possibly more dignified motive, and one which contributes much to the modern interest in the grotesque, is the escape which it provides from cramping realism. Realism for its own sake is a blind alley. Photography, owing to the peculiarities of the medium, is made particularly aware of this fact. Photographers who are irked and weary of merely factual reports of everyday people in the everyday world may well turn to the world of the grotesque. When the world of the grotesque is known and appreciated, the real world becomes vastly more significant. We become aware of the dark forces that work behind the curtain of events; the skull suddenly leers at us through the flesh; and we see the exaggerated gesture that lurks behind the most commonplace acts.

Edgar Allen Poe in his "Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque" gave a fresh artistic impetus to the use of such material. Neglected or belittled in his own country, his work created in Europe a new school of literary thought. Many excellent examples of modern grotesque art owe their inspiration to his stories.

The picture opposite owes its origin to a "property" for which I was unable to find any use. This was an old bowsprite about eight feet long which was washed up on the beach. This piece of timber, finely weathered and of beautiful photographic quality, demanded to be put into a picture; but no picture suggested itself. It lay around the studio for months, very much in the way, and a continual source of annoyance. Every time I fell over it I tried to figure out a pictorial use for it. One day when I was more annoyed than usual, I happened to remember the long swinging blade in Poe's story of "The Pit and the Pendulum." Here at last was the picture.

Owing to the considerable set-up which was required, it was necessary to plan the picture in advance. The elevated camera angle chosen for the final set-up was rendered possible by a platform in one end of the studio. The picture owes much of its effectiveness to the looming of the perspective obtained by placing the pendulum almost in line with the camera. This effect was made feasible by the fact that the model (because he was lying flat on the floor) was able to hold the pose for a long time without movement. Thus it was possible to close the diaphragm down to its lowest stop, and, by a long exposure, obtain perfect definition and depth. The lighting approximates Plastic quality. Since there is no separation between subject and background, no rear lighting unit was used. By means of a cardboard shield held by an assistant, the foreground and edges were thrown into deep shadow.

As will be seen by comparing the original picture with the finished print, considerable local control was necessary in inking the matrix. The lateral beams and the suspended loop of rope were added by inking locally with well ground soft ink. The cement floor was converted into cobble stones by the use of a one-eight inch hopping brush, using two consistencies of ink to obtain richness in the shadows as well as gradation. Comparison with the original shows that two ropes were added to the composition. By means of additional shadows and high-lights, the ropes were made to bite into the flesh. Soft ink on a small brush supplied the shadows, and the high-lights were picked out with a scrap of kneaded rubber shaped to a tiny hopping point. While still moist, the transfer was subjected to further control, through the intensification of high-lights.

DATA. Leica, Model D.
Lens. Elmar, 50 mm., f.3.5.
Exposure. Approximately two seconds at f.18.
Film. Dupont Superior, 1934.
Conditions of shooting. Shot obliquely from above.
Camera distance. Approximately 14 feet.
Lighting. "Plastic."
Setting. Cement floor, with ropes and long beam.
Developer. Supersoup.
Time of development. One hour and a half.
Printing paper. Defender Velour Black I.
Print developer Amidol. (See *Woman of Languedoc*.)
Process. Bromoil transfer.

HUMAN RELATIONS

HATRED is frequently the emotion that lies behind grotesque art.

There are different kinds of hatred. There is a hearty animal hatred which is common in choleric natures. This hatred is rarely of long duration, and finds its natural expression, when it tries the grotesque, in erude earicature and forthright lampoon. This hearty hate often turns strongly to the comic; for the hater keenly *enjoys* himself in converting the thing he hates to an objeet of ridieule.

At the opposite pole to this animal hatred is the subtle hatred that stores itself up over a long period, that refines itself gradually and that distills itself by small drops into a philosophy. This sort of hatred turns to grotesque of a strange, attenuated type. Baudelaire and Beardsley are examples of this attitude. Baudelaire dwelt on themes of death and deeay, not for their own sake, but beeause they were for him fitting symbols of the corruption of the human soul; and he paid tribute to the all-devouring Worm beeause it seemed to him the consummation of all beauty, all dreams, all aspirations. And Aubrey Beardsley, with his cruel line, depicted a reptilian humanity, beeause he had seen the seeret snake that feeds on the heart of man.

Between these two extremes, of hatred that flares and is gone, and hatred that beeomes a consuming philosophy, there is a type that mulls over its hatred, generalizes on it, and expresses this generalization in a grotesque symbol. Examples that we may mention here are Hogarth, Daumier, and Goya. These artists at various times made what may be called "propaganda pietures." In a propaganda pieture, the important thing is neither the pieture itself nor the immediate objeet of the artist's hatred, but the train of thought whieh the pieture engenders in the beholder. The maker of a propaganda pieture, in a word, has an axe to grind; through the medium of a generalized grotesque symbol, he points a moral, he preaehes a sermon, he reads a lesson.

The beginning of *Human Relations* was trivial enough. The telephone company overcharged me for long distance ealls. I remonstrated, I protested; but in vain. Eventually I paid the bill and departed, warm with righteous indignation. If my hatred of all things eonneeted with telephones had been of the purely animal type whieh I have just deseribed, I should probably have been content with depicting the president of the telephone company hanging from one of his own telephone poles. But my hatred stirred around in my mind and got itself involved with several other pet hates that were disturbing me at that time. These were the days when stoeks were stopping dividends, when lives of thrift and industry were being wiped out by the foreclosing of mortgages and the closing of banks, when Japan was carving herself a large sliee of China. Everywhere there was evident a spirit of "Take what you can, and to hell with your neighbor." Those who werc strong seemed to be, in sheer wantonness, gouging the eyes of humanity.

Two models, of course, were required to earry out this pieture idea, one to supply the outraged, tortured face, one to furnish the eruelly thrusting arm. The first model applied considerable make-up, emphasizing the deep lines of suffering and suggesting the puekering of the skin around the eyes where the fingers seem to have entered. Against his elosed eyes the other model rested the doubled knuckles of his first two fingers. Notice how the metal wristlet adds strength and eruelty to the gesture of the arm.

A slightly rounded pieee of ehipboard was held up to suggest the curve of the world. This symbol helps to inerease the impression of impersonality.

This is one of the very few instances in whieh I have resorted to etehing on the negative. The doubled-over tip of the finger was removed in this manner.

The pieture was printed through a No. 1 Texture Matrix. The image was elongated somewhat, in order to take it even further from the field of literal representation.

DATA. Camera. Soho Reflex, 3¼ x 4¼.
Lens. Goerz-Dagor, 7 inch.
Exposure. One-fifth second at f.8.
Film. Agfa par-speed Ortho film pack, 1932.
Camera distance. Approximately 6 feet.
Lighting. Modified "Basic."
Setting. White background. Diagonal mask of chip board.
Dcveloper. Glycin. Regular formula. (See data on *Johan the Mad.*)
Time of development. One hour and a half.
Ncgative control. Finger tip removed from negative by etching.
Projection control. Elongation with dodging in. Texture Matrix No. 1.
Printing paper. Defender Velour Black I.
Print dcvcloper. Eastman D-64, B. solution. (See data on *Machiavelli.*)
Trcatment of print. Abrasion-Tone Process.

HUMAN · RELATIONS · 1932

BELPHEGOR

IT is probably true that pictorial art cannot touch so directly the springs of fear as can either the literary art or the cinema. Fear—and the answering thrill of the scalp—is stirred much more subtly, and at the same time much more directly, through the medium of the more primitive sense impressions, touch and smell. Those familiar with the ghost stories of Montague James can testify to this fact. In one memorable story, a man sitting alone in a lamp-lit room senses something stirring beside his chair. Without looking, he puts his hand down; and a *soft* and *hairy* mass rises against it. Consider the utter impossibility of adequately rendering this moment in pictorial terms. You can represent the hairy mass, you can represent the hand, you can represent the horrified face of the man; but nothing can represent the searing horror conveyed by the suggested tactual sensation.

Fear also can be rendered in terms of the cinema medium. Here the purely pictorial element receives much assistance from the additional stimulus of movement and sound.

So in the pictorial art of the grotesque we are not so much concerned with stirring fear, or with representing fear, as with representing *symbols* of fear. The elements of the horrible in grotesque art seldom frighten us any more; they are well domesticated little horrors, thoroughly house-broke, and of a friendly nature.

Belphegor is one of the Witchcraft and Demonology series. The Devil was, of course, the principal deity of the witch cult. But he was attended by a large hierarchy of subsidiary demons: Thaumiel, Adam-Belial, Satharial, Astaroth, Golab, Asmodeus, Belphegor, Baal-Chanan, and Adramalek. There are several curious books—notably *Le Dragon Rouge* and *Le Grand Grimoire*—which contain detailed portraits of many of these demons. *Belphegor* is derived from several of these cuts. The primary problem of this picture was one of make-up. The collodion medium here used is one formerly exploited in the motion picture field by the late Lon Chaney.

The collodion make-up is a difficult process, and should not be undertaken without due preparation and understanding. Conventional character make-up is a species of *painting* for three-dimensional effect. The use of collodion takes us into *sculpture*. Hence its use must be based on a sculptural sense of structure. The make-up must not violate the basic bony structure of the face. The structure may be warped and exaggerated; but it must not be lost sight of or contradicted.

One caution needs to be observed in using collodion. The solvent is ether; so, to avoid damage to the model, it is advisable to work in a well-ventilated dressing room with an electric fan going.

The general method of constructing a collodion make-up* is as follows:

The major added protuberances are modeled in wads of cotton and are tentatively fitted to the face. A coat of collodion is applied to the face with a brush at each point where additions are to be made. Then the cotton is quickly pressed into place. It is necessary to work swiftly, as the collodion dries almost instantly. As each wad of cotton is attached, its outstanding fluffy edges are pressed down to the face with the collodion-filled brush. After all the wads are attached to the face, their modeling is adjusted with the fingers. If additional protuberance is needed, it is built onto the cotton already in place with more collodion. With small wisps of cotton, each brushed into place with collodion, the modeling is refined, and the large wads are blended into the contours of the face.

In *Belphegor*, the brow was built out large and heavy over the eyes. This operation made the eyes small and brutal and caused the forehead to recede. The nose was built up to meet the line of the brow. The cheek bones were built out and the jaw was widened.

When the cotton is attached and modeled to the desired shape, it is then varnished with several coats of collodion. When these coats are dry, grease paint is applied over the entire face. Considerable care is demanded in working the paint over the attached cotton. It is necessary to lay the paint on quite heavily in order to disguise the difference in colour between the cotton and the flesh.

When the final smooth coat of paint was completed on the Belphegor make-up, much additional work was done with a brown lining pencil, emphasizing the eyes and accentuating the modeling.

The Dynamic Light was chosen in order to give the maximum dramatic emphasis to the crude, rugged modeling of the face.

Local printing was employed in making the print to obtain additional luminosity to the shadow areas. The dominance of the face was increased by dodging in.

A large amount of control was exercised through the Abrasion-Tone process. High-lights were intensified and the modeling was made more powerful.

DATA. Camera. Soho Reflex, 3¼ x 4¼.
Lens. Goerz-Dagor, 7 inch.
Exposure. One-half second at f.8.
Film. Verichrome, 1935.
Camera distance. Approximately 5 feet.
Lighting. "Dynamic" light.
Developer. Metol-Borax. (See data on *Stamboul*.)
Dev. time. Two hours.
Projection control. Local printing. Texture No. 2. Printing paper. Defender Velour Black I.
Print developer. D-64, B. solution. (See *Machiavelli*.)
Treatment of print. Maximum control with Abrasion-Tone Process.

*Liquid collodion may be secured at any drug store.

THE HERETIC

TORTURE and pain are frequent themes of grotesque art. Indeed, it is only in the medium of the grotesque that these powerful primitive motives are admissible; for the realistic representation of torture or pain is intolerable pictorially.

Like the other phases of grotesque art, the representation of such subjects exerts a tremendous fascination. The attention given to them is shocked, and often unwilling; but it is intense and breathless. This fascination is not reprehensible, nor a sign of complete morbidity. Persons who would be made acutely ill at seeing a dog run over in the street may quite sincerely enjoy contemplating the most brutal themes in the medium of the grotesque. The spectacle of torture strikes through our civilized shell to a primordial impulse of cruelty that lurks in every mortal man. This impulse lies deep and stirs seldom, but it is there. It is not so long ago that public executions were a common spectacle. And we still go to prize fights and wrestling matches. A piece of grotesque art may appeal, in a manner utterly refined and quintessential, to this same impulse.

The use of this theme in art is of great antiquity. Assyrian sculptures show torture and execution of prisoners of war. Human sacrifices are depicted in Mayan sculptures. Chinese painters have shown, with great particularity and the most delicate artistry, the method of performing a large number of intricate and clever tortures. Among the first books to issue from the printing presses in the fifteenth century were collections of Lives of the Martyrs, in which woodcuts displayed, in naive and circumstantial detail, the horrible sufferings—by stoning, flaying, breaking on the wheel, and boiling in oil—whereby they attained to Blessedness. Medieval artists delighted also to portray the sufferings of the damned in Hell, serving thereby the laudable twofold purpose of gratifying the righteous and of creating good grotesque art. The torture theme appears frequently in the art of the Middle Ages. Certainly the doting care with which Medieval artists lingered over the outraged and multilated body of the Christ was not motivated solely by religious zeal.

In times gone by, the most amazing ingenuity of invention and fertility of imagination have been exercised in exploiting the human body's capacity for feeling pain. To the Chinese, torture assumed the delicacy and refinement of an aesthetic problem. In Europe, the tortures were more gross; but, as revealed by the instruments which have survived—the thumb screw, the Spanish boot, the Iron Maiden—thoroughly effective, and not without imagination.

Judicial torture in Europe possibly reached its climax in the period of the Inquisition and the witch trials of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth centuries. The present picture was suggested by the accounts of these trials.

When a suspected witch was apprehended (according to the reports) she was stripped, searched and shaved. Her body was carefully examined for unusual marks. If any was found, it constituted presumptive evidence of converse with the Devil. "On the meaner Proselytes the Devil fixes in some secret Part of their Bodies a Mark, as his Seal to know his own by." (Forbes, 1730.) The Devil's Mark is described as being like a flea bite, or sometimes as a "blew Spot" like the impression of "a Hare's foot, or the Foot of a Rat or Spider." Sometimes the searchers found supernumerary breasts or "witch paps." These were even more serious evidence.

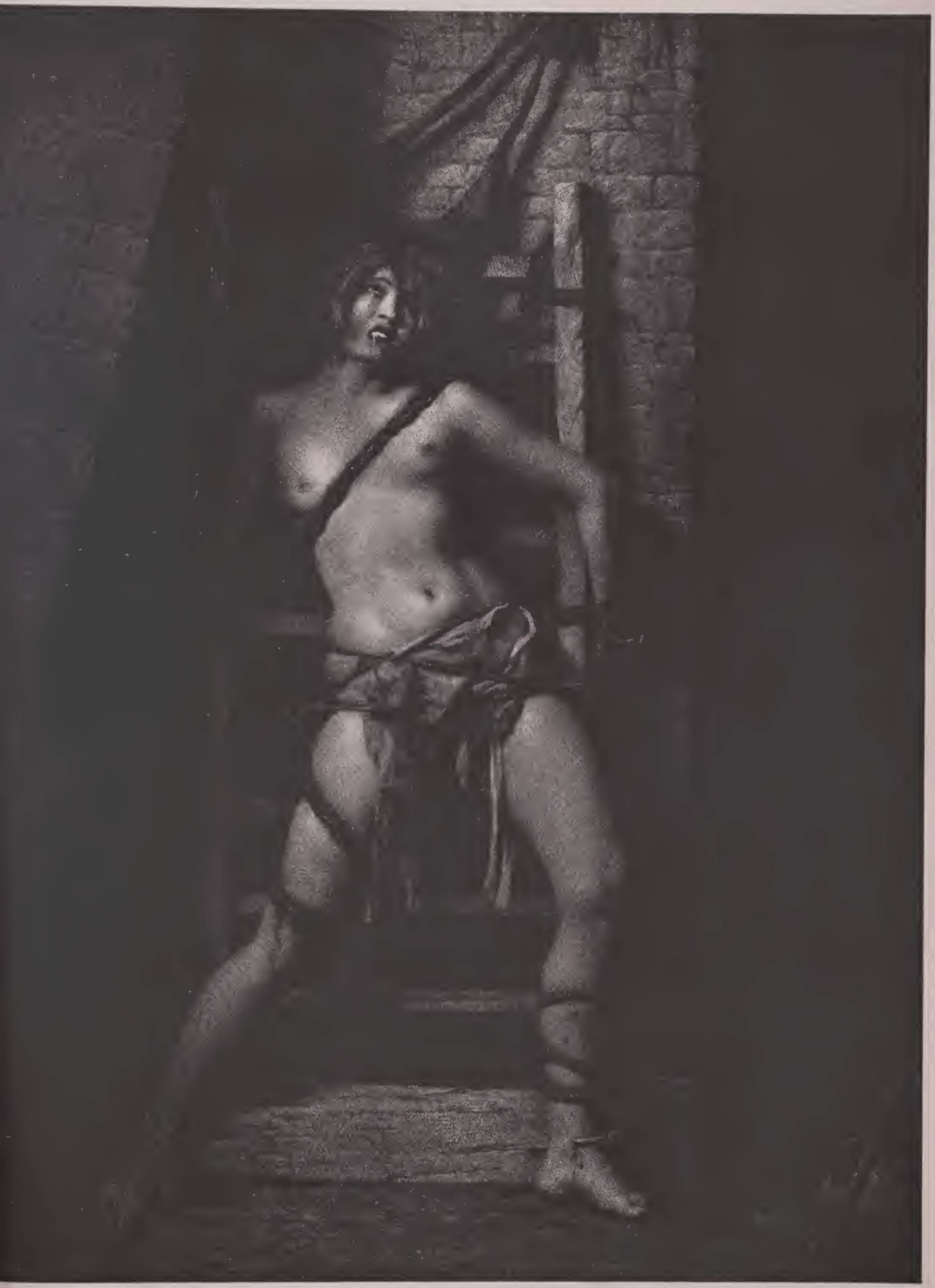
If no marks were found, she was left thus stripped in a cell with a peep-hole, through which secret watchers took note of her every action and word. Sometimes under these conditions she would reveal "Stigma" which the searchers had missed; sometimes she would betray herself by incautious conversation with the Devil or her familiars.

If the inquisitors still failed to find the evidence they sought or to exact a confession, she was subjected to the additional persuasion of the torture. After being given certain preliminary tortures, she was strung up and given a final opportunity to confess and recant. This is the moment represented in *The Heretic.*

As in the case of the *Preparation for the Sabbot*, a fairly elaborate setting was used. And, in similar manner, the setting was assembled (except for the painted background) from everyday materials. A piece of the porch railing was taken up and stood on end and the victim was lashed to it. The mysterious piece of apparatus is merely a dictionary stand. The torture chamber of the Inquisition was thus assembled with little difficulty—save for the later inquisition put on by the landlord on the subject of the porch railing.

The nails that penetrate her ankles were accomplished by small touches of Alvord's Opaque on the negative. Thus the high-lights were supplied. The shadows and heads of the nails added by Abrasion-Tone. By the latter process, also, the ropes were made (by altered modeling) to imbed themselves more deeply in the flesh.

DATA. Camera. Soho Reflex, 3¼ x 4¼.
Lens. Zeiss-Tessar, 6½ inch, f.4.5.
Exposure. Approximately one-half second at f.8 or f.11.
Film. Agfa par-speed Ortho film pack, 1926.
Camera distance. Approximately 14 feet.
Lighting. "Dynamic" light without rear unit.
Setting. Painted background of rock wall, with sundry properties.
Developer. Glycin. (For formula see data on *Johan the Mad.*)
Time of development. At least two hours.
Negative control. Use of "Opaque."
Projection control. Texture Matrix No. 1.
Printing paper. Defender Velour Black I.
Print developer. Eastman D-64, B. solution. (See data on *Machiavelli.*)
Treatment of print. Abrasion-Tone Process.



THE VAMPIRE

VICTOR HUGO in a letter of appreciation addressed to Baudelaire testified that the latter had taught him "a new shudder." There are certain types who seek the grotesque merely to gain this new shudder. These are the ones who are consumed with that anaemia of the soul, boredom. Their ability to appreciate the quieter sensations has become depleted, and, like drug addicts increasing their dose, they are obliged to seek new and ever more violent sensations. From this group are derived the extremest, most unpleasant, and least productive talents of decadent art. Uncreative, unsatisfied, they arrive at an exclusive and coprolitic devotion to the fruits of the charnel house and the morgue.

Aside from this enervated boredom which leads to these dreary excesses, there is boredom of another and more vital sort; an active, creative force that leads to accomplishment along new lines. Boredom, with the prosaic material of the everyday world, with the smug limitations of his medium, leads the artist to seek new and more expressive forms. Often this search brings him to the grotesque. The photographer, bored to distraction by the banalities of realism and the imperious demands of the Machine, should find grateful release in the exaggerations of grotesque art.

The art of the grotesque is not mere morbidity—far from it. We do not seek, for example, the purely animal shock of photographing the aftermath of automobile accidents. Such subject matter would be ideal, if mere morbid sensation were the sole aim. But, on the contrary, the thing photographed must have pictorial merit, and, as a grotesque symbol, it must have meaning.

I have suggested that grotesque art derives its peculiar power from its connection with very primitive human fears and impulses. Most potent among these fears is the great arch-fear, the great mystery of mysteries, death. In grotesque art it is a powerful motive. Indeed, some have suggested that the fear of death is the basic motive of all art, driving men to try to immortalize a little of themselves in material more enduring than the flesh.

Common among primitive peoples is the idea of the "dead soul." This "dead soul," according to this belief, was not transported to a land of the dead, but dwelt in or near the corpse. This belief was the original reason for tomb building—to furnish the dead soul with decent shelter. The tomb was probably the world's first architecture. And early religions centered in the tomb.

As a result of this belief in the "dead soul" there was an awe and fear of the dead body. The dead soul might be malignant or resentful, and might do harm to the living. Even today, many people experience, in the presence of death, a cold fear that does not admit of rational explanation. In one of his magnificent stories of the Civil War, filled with subtle intimations of horror, Ambrose Bierce tells of such an instance; a young soldier watching alone at night on a dark road, is driven to insane extremity as he becomes obsessed with the idea that a two-day-old corpse fifty feet down the road is slowly creeping toward him through the shadows.

This fear of the malignant "dead soul" is expressed in the legend of the vampire, one of the most terrible beliefs that has come down to us from the remote past—the foul corpse, neither living nor dead, that crawls from its grave each night to suck the blood of the living.

According to the belief, a person bitten by a vampire is apt, on his death, to become one himself. For this reason, vampirism is liable to break out in epidemics. Such an epidemic occurred in Hungary between 1730 and 1735. Whole districts in the territory of Transylvania and Tokay were paralyzed with terror; people feared to sleep lest they be bitten by vampires, they feared to die, lest they turn into vampires. Finally the epidemic was eradicated by tearing up graves wholesale and destroying all bodies that displayed signs of blood or of movement in their coffins. A contemporary account tells of such a disinterment as follows: "His body was red; his hair, nails and beard had grown again, and his veins were replete with fluid blood, which flowed from all parts of his body upon the winding sheet which encompassed him."

There were several methods of destroying vampires. (1) The heart was torn out and the body burned. (2) Boiling water and vinegar were poured over the grave. (3) An aspen stake was driven through the heart, pining the body to the ground.

This picture represents a vampire than has been destroyed by the stake. The two principal problems in arranging it were the make-up and the method of securing the effect of the stake. Necessary for the makeup were turkey quills (for the teeth) and a little crepe hair. The stake was constructed from cardboard. Torn scraps of cardboard glued to the top suggested the flattening of the wood where the mallet had been applied. By means of triangular tabs at the bottom, the stake was glued to the breast. Tomato ketchup served for blood. It was poured around the stake to conceal the joint, and a small amount was encouraged to trickle off the breast.

DATA. Camera. Soho Reflex, 3¼ x 4¼.

Lens. Goerz-Dagor, 7 inch.

Exposure. Approximately one-half second at f.8.

Film. Agfa par-speed Ortho film pack, 1926.

Conditions of shooting. Oblique downward shot at model on floor.

Camera distance. Approximately 7 feet.

Lighting. "Dynamic."

Setting. Black background. Grass mats, stone, and other properties.

Developer. Glycin, regular formula. (See data on *Johan the Mad.*)

Time of development. At least one hour.

Projection control. Dodging in, Texture Matrix No. 1.

Printing paper. Defender Velour Black I.

Print developer. Eastman D-64, B. solution. (See data on *Machiavelli.*)

Treatment of print. Abrasion-Tone Process.

RD-247

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